A SYSTEMS STUDY OF THE CHRISTIAN AND GERMANIC INTERRELATIONSHIPS IN THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

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PREFACE

This study is an outgrowth of my interest in Christianity, Old English literature, and an integrated, synthetic approach to scholarship. Here, I have used the basic concepts of general systems theory, the abstract systems concepts which underlie any systems approach, to develop a methodology for the study of literature particularly suited to the investigation of literary interrelationships at any level. The application here is to the interrelationship of the Christian and the Germanic elements in the Old English poem, The Dream of the Rood. Thus, two purposes emerge as central in this study: the development of a systems methodology for the study of literature and the clarification of the nature of the interrelationships of the Christian and the Germanic elements in The Dream of the Rood, both as a point of literary interest in itself and as a demonstration of the systems approach to a literary problem.

The major problem encountered in this study was the massive amount of information which became involved when I attempted to take seriously the Christian and the Germanic aspects of the environment in which the poem was written because both of those elements were operating at an intense and complex level in Anglo-Saxon England. It was by following carefully the methodological principle of developing in the environment of the poem only those elements which helped clarify the nature of the Christian or Germanic elements actually found in the poem and by relying heavily on the work of previous scholars that the problem was overcome. The crucial point of the study is the brief but explicit

statement in Chapter V of the nature of the interrelationships of the Germanic and Christian elements defined in Chapters III and IV.

I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Jane Marie Luecke, the scholar who unlocked for me the mighty word-hoard of Old English literature and chairman of my dissertation committee who gave me much assistance and encouragement in this study. I also thank the other members of the committee, Dr. David S. Berkeley, Dr. Judson Milburn, and Dr. Kyle Yates, Jr., for their interest and helpful criticism. Two other people whom I wish to thank for challenge and encouragement are Dr. John Milstead, Director of the English Honors Program and Dr. Clinton Keeler, Head of the English Department at Oklahoma State University. I am extremely grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Gant for assistance which in several ways made this study possible.

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THE DREAM OF THE ROOD AND TWENTIETH-CENTURY LITERARY STUDY

The Dream of the Rood is one of the most intriguing of Old English poems because of the uncertainty of its origin, its simultaneous embodiment of pagan Germanic and early medieval Christian concepts, its relationship to the Ruthwell Cross, and perhaps most important, because of the inherent beauty of the work. It has been attributed to Caedmon,[1] Cynewulf,[2] an anonymous Caedmonian,[3] an anonymous Cynewulfian,[4] an anonymous unlearned Anglo-Saxon scop,[5] and an anonymous highly educated theologian skilled in the fine points of theological issues.[6] It has been dated from the late seventh century[7] to the tenth century.[8] The poem is sometimes treated as a unity from its initial composition,[9] sometimes as a composite of an original poem plus a later inferior addition,[10] and sometimes as a composite which results in a unified poem of high quality.[11]

But the ambiguities which surround the poem are not due to a dearth of scholarly attention. The poem has been studied carefully from many perspectives, especially in terms of its religious content, its Germanic qualities and its poetics (rhetorical techniques, metrics, structure). And there is, of course, the basic scholarship in the area of textual and philological work.

One of the earliest careful examinations of The Dream with reference to specific religious matters in the poem itself and their relation to the context which produced the poem is H. R. Patch's 1919 article "Liturgical Influences in the Dream of the Rood."[12] In that article Patch demonstrates the resemblances between The Dream and the liturgy which the poet knew, but Patch finds little in terms of direct allusion to the liturgy. He sees the influence of the liturgy in The Dream as more a matter of general attitude and tone than of the incorporation of liturgical elements in the poem.

In a much more recent study called "The Liturgical Background to The Dream of the Rood," Dom Peter Farina concludes "that The Dream is indebted to the liturgy for almost every idea."[13] Farina suggests that the poem is "a sermon in verse" following the traditional structure exordium, exemplum, exposition, peroration and final blessing. He suggests that lines 148b-156 are displaced and should follow 101a (p. 627A).

The doctrinal background of The Dream is the subject of Rosemary Woolf's "Doctrinal Influences on The Dream of the Rood," which is a detailed study of the doctrinal writings and controversies which constitute the philosophical and theological content of the poem. Her assumption is that the poet is fully aware of and keenly responsive to these issues, especially those concerning "the person and nature of Christ and definition of the Redemption" (p. 137). She believes that doctrinal issues account for some of the distinctive elements of the poem such as "the semi-identification of the Cross with Christ" by which "the poet enables his hearers to share in an imaginative recrea-

tion of Christ's sufferings, whilst the problem which bewilders the mind--the nature of Christ's consciousness--is evaded" (p. 153).

In a 1963 dissertation Sister Anna Mercedes Courtney develops the thesis that "the poem is the product of the monastic learning of eighth-century England"[14] and that "the imagination of the poet and, presumably, that of his audience had been influenced by the 'typological' or 'figurative' view of reality and history basic to the liturgy of the Church and to much patristic writing" (p. 739).

In much the same vein, John V. Fleming finds in The Dream of the Rood "a figurative statement of the main principles of early Benedictine asceticism and a typically monastic view of salvation."[15] Fleming's article is an attempt to demonstrate that The Dream of the Rood is "a poem about monastic life, the Christian life par excellence, born of the deep spirituality of Anglo-Saxon Benedictinism" (p. 71).

John Canuteson also deals with the religious element of The Dream in his explanation of how the poet makes vivid the moment of crucifixion. "The poet connects the crucifixion with the second coming of Christ and eternal life."[16] Canuteson continues:

> By examining several passages in the Bible dealing with eschatology, particularly the New Jerusalem and the bride of Christ passages, we can see that the poet is able to underscore the significance of the crucifixion by looking forward to the Day of Judgment and the mystical marriage of Christ and the Church (pp. 293-294).

Dom Peter Farina looks to medieval Christian ceremony for a possible explanation of the puzzling use of waedum (weeds) in a passage in The Dream (lines 14b-16a). Farina recounts the "medieval Deposition ceremonies in which, on Good Friday nights, the figure of Christ was unnailed and lowered from the cross," and suggests that the sheet

used in this ceremony and left draped on the cross is the referent for the waedum under consideration.[17]

In her article "The Dream of the Rood and Its Connections with Early Christian Art" Barbara C. Raw develops the thesis "that the vision [in the poem] is concerned not with the crucifixion but with the cult of the cross,"[18] a phenomenon arising in Jerusalem in the fourth century and moving first to Constantinople and then farther west (pp. 251-252). There is evidence of Palestinian influence in early Northumbrian art--for example in "the treatment of the vine-scroll patterns on early Northumbrian crosses" (p. 252). But through the eighth century, when England was asserting a strong cultural influence on the continent, there is no indication of the cult of the cross in English art. Later the direction of influence shifted, and "by the ninth century continental culture was beginning to make a contribution to English art. The cult of the cross may well have been one of the things which England gained from the continent at this time" (p. 253). Raw concludes:

> To this period--the end of the eighth century and the first half of the ninth--belong the writings of Cynewulf and his school. Cynewulf himself testifies to his devotion to the cross in the epilogue to the Elene; the poet of The Dream of the Rood belongs . . . to the school of Cynewulf. His poem can be seen as the work of a man familiar with the symbolism of Palestinian and Mediterranean art, which was already current in England, who had come under the influence of a new devotion which was flourishing on the continent, devotion to the cross (p. 253).

There is one religious artifact of particular interest to Old English scholars with regard to The Dream, the Ruthwell Cross, which has inscribed on it in runic letters a large portion of the poem. Robert B. Burlin comes to the conclusion in "The Ruthwell Cross, The Dream

of the Rood, and the Vita Contemplativa" that the poem is unified as a vision and as a statement about vision in the context of Northumbrian Christianity of the late seventh and early eighth centuries. Burlin presents the Ruthwell Cross as a product of the same context (pp. 23-43). The Brussels Cross, which contains a much smaller portion of the poem, has also received detailed analysis.[19]

Interest in the Germanic elements of the poem is seen in such works as Robert E. Diamond's article "Heroic Diction in The Dream of the Rood"[20] which is a brief but detailed catalog of the heroic elements in The Dream and explanation of their presence in the poem in relation to the two parallel societies, military and religious, at the time the poem was composed. He says that "these two important and dominant segments of Anglo-Saxon society gave rise to poetry which preserves the old clichés and formulas of heroic poetry but applies them to Christian subjects" (p. 7). Diamond develops the concept that the Christian Dream poet used the oral-formulaic Germanic tradition and would "naturally apply all the old heroic epithets and formulas to his matter" (p. 5). Diamond continues:

> Such a poet, then, is in some sense a captive of his traditional diction. There are not an infinite number of ways to express an idea in correct verses; there are only the traditional ways. While the poet can rely on the traditional diction to help him out of tight places in composing, he is also caught in the net of tradition, so to speak--he cannot compose in any other way. This applies not only to his actual choice of words, but to the themes and narrative technique of his work. The tradition in which the poet was composing was a narrative tradition. Dogmatic or introspective subject matter would most likely be passed over in favor of something that gave the poet a story to tell. To call the thing by its right name: the poets tended to choose subjects from Christian story that were rather sensational. (p. 5)

In "Christ as Hero in The Dream of the Rood," Carol Jean Wolf discusses the poet's use of "the traditional language of Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry to depict Christ as a hero valiantly engaging in conflict" (p. 203). She also uses the concept which Donald K. Fry calls type-scenes in Anglo-Saxon narrative poetry.[21] Wolf develops the idea that the poet uses the heroic language and the type-scenes not because of the "tyranny of tradition" (p. 209) but because this tradition is compatible with the "vision of the significance of the crucifixion" which the poet represents (p. 210). Edith Wardale also elaborates the heroic nature of The Dream in her work, Chapters on Old English Literature.[22]

Matters of poetic technique, metrics, and structure are of particular significance in The Dream because of the speaking cross, an abundance of "hypermetric" verses, and the special problems of unity in the poem. One of the most striking features of the poem is its use of the technique called prosopopoeia, which presents inanimate objects speaking. The major critical work which develops this concept is Margaret Schlauch's 1940 article, "The Dream of the Rood as Prosopopoeia." In it Margaret Schlauch discusses Latin models, particularly Ovid's De Nuce, as being generally similar to The Dream of the Rood. Her thesis is that the Dream poet had access to a Latin tradition of prosopopoeia--"discourses by an inanimate object, making use of narrative . . . ."[23] She further comments, "The originality of treatment by Anglo-Saxon writers is generally conceded, but it is undisputed that Latin models were near at hand and well loved" (p. 23).

J. A. Burrow develops the significance of the prosopopoeia in the poem. In "An Approach to the Dream of the Rood," Burrow discusses the poem with reference to its "freedom of emphasis and selection" and

the "new, non-biblical form, involving dreamer, vision and speaking Cross" (p. 123). He considers the prosopopoeia "as a controlling factor in the total meaning of the poem" (pp. 123-124) and the dreamer as the basis for the personal character of the poem. Burrow compares The Dream with other poems on the same theme in Old and Middle English to establish this personal character as the distinctive quality of The Dream (pp. 132-133).

Several formalist treatments of The Dream have appeared in recent years. Neil D. Isaacs summarizes his approach to the poem as follows:

> In The Dream of the Rood, the poet carefully separates the dreamer-speaker from the dreamed-speaker, giving four persons (five if one chooses to separate poet from his dreamer-persona): audience, dreamer-speaker (poet), dreamed-speaker (rood), and Christ. This separation leads inevitably to total integration: when the cross is identified with Christ, the dreamer and the audience--having been brought into identity with each other and then with the cross--are also brought to a (mystical) oneness with Christ. Thus, the structure of the poem supports the apparent religious intention of the poem, the theme of the essential oneness of man and Christ, or of all men in Christ.[24]

O. D. Macrae-Gibson is also primarily concerned with the structure of The Dream in the article "Christ the Victor-Vanquished in The Dream of the Rood" in which he traces the transformations of the Christ figure in The Dream from an initial position of active warrior to passive sufferer to victorious lord in heaven--without emphasis on the bodily resurrection, which would be intrusive. Macrae-Gibson contradicts Patten's development of the transformation of Christ which sees Christ as initially defeated.[25]

Faith H. Patten's "Structure and Meaning in The Dream of the Rood" presents first an analysis of the poem's internal structure based

entirely on relationships within the poem and second the significance of the parts of the poem in terms of the four levels of patristic scriptural exegesis: tropological, allegorical, historical, and anagogical.[26] Patten says that "the two points of view [dreamer and cross] provide the backbone of the poem's structure which, at once complex and unified, both creates and reveals the poem's meaning" (p. 385).

In The Web of Words, Bernard F. Huppé analyzes the structure of The Dream as follows:

> The basic design of the Dream of the Rood is clear. It consists of four scenes: I, 1-23, the vision; II, 24-77, the narrative of the Cross; III, 78-121, the peroration and exhortation of the Cross; IV, 122-156, the dreamer's prayer to Cross and Christ. However, this relatively simple frame supports an elaborate rhetorical structure in which a series of striking antitheses is developed. The antitheses derive basically from the juxtaposition, the communicatio idiomatum, of the two aspects of Christ as God and man. In the Crucifixion, Christ suffered as man, but without diminishing his godhead. His passion is universal and particular, and the ignominy of his shameful death is the glory of his triumph over death. Without sin he died for sinners. The Cross, in turn, is the symbol of the mystery of the Redemption, the triumph of mortification.[27]

In the article "Ambiguity and Anticipation in The Dream of the Rood" M. J. Swanton examines what he calls "an inner structure of poetic densities"[28] based on a pattern of semantic ambiguity appearing throughout the poem which "erects a series of postulates in the mind of the reader which the body of the poem must and does, satisfy. The total effect, therefore, is not confusion but tighter concision" (p. 425).

At a more technical level of poetic study of The Dream, Robert D. Stevick in "The Meter of The Dream of the Rood" argues for a lineation based on rhythmic and syntactic along with alliterative criteria rather than exclusively on the basis of alliteration. This lineation

would treat "expanded" lines as two lines of normal Old English verse, thus providing a normal Old English lineation for all of The Dream of the Rood.[29]

A basic type of scholarly criticism which consists of the editing of a text and supplying the reader with historical notes and comments concerning suggested readings of words and phrases where questions arise is supplied for The Dream of the Rood by Bruce Dickins and Alan S. C. Ross's The Dream of the Rood, which is a detailed study of the text of the Ruthwell Cross, the Brussels Cross and the Vercelli Dream of the Rood and the relationships among these works. Other sources of textual information concerning The Dream are Vol. II of Krapp and Dobbie's Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records;[30] and M. J. Swanton's The Dream of the Rood in the Old and Middle English Text Series.[31] The earliest thorough textual treatment of The Dream is Albert Stanburrough Cook's 1905 Dream of the Rood.[32]

Many word and phrase problems in The Dream have received close attention. G. C. Britton in "Bealuwara Weorc in The Dream of the Rood" examines the previous scholarly suggestions concerning the problem phrase bealuwara weorc in The Dream of the Rood and suggests that the phrase be taken to be in apposition with ic, giving the translation "that I, the work of devils, have suffered grievous sorrows."[33] Britton points out that such a reading is consistent with contrasting attitudes toward the cross in the poem (pp. 275-276).

W. F. Bolton proposes the reading of line 9b of The Dream with engel understood to be the cross as a nuntius, messenger.[34]

D. G. Scragg in "'Hwaet/þaet' in The Dream of the Rood, line 2" presents the weight behind þaet as an alternate reading for the manu-

script haet which most modern editors amend to Hwaet. The þaet was suggested in the 19th century but subsequently forgotten.[35]

Scholarship has been effective in clarifying particular points of interest in The Dream of the Rood and in supplying several supportable readings of the poem, but there are still problems which remain unsolved. There are unsolved problems in the area of relationships of major elements in the poem, particularly the relationships between the Christian and the Germanic elements, both of which have received considerable attention from the critics. The problem lies, at least partially, in the critical methodology employed in literary study. Most critical techniques tend to be reductive or analytical, rather than synthetic and dynamic in approach, each defining an area of interest and proceeding with analysis in isolation from other elements which are active in the literary work.

In fairness to many of the excellent critics and scholars on whose shoulders all other students and scholars of literature stand, it must be stated that in actual practice scholars and critics often mix approaches in ways which are helpful in approaching particular problems. But the point here is that the critical tools available today, in themselves, tend to perpetuate a fragmented, reductive, analytical approach to literature.

Because of the influence of the tools of contemporary criticism in the study of The Dream, it is necessary to examine briefly the nature of current critical and scholarly methodology before proceeding with this study of the poem.

Current Approaches to the Study of Poetry

In theory, the range of critical approaches to poetry is defined by its two extremes which are (1) an exclusive concern for a work of art in itself and (2) a concern for matters--isolated or in constructs--which exist outside of and often independent of specific literary works. In practice, as has been mentioned, most critics use techniques from any approach which proves to be helpful at a given point, even if a particular critical methodology is characteristic of a given critic. This is to say that the spectrum of critical approaches is just that, and not necessarily a spectrum of critics and scholars. When a critic is said to be representative of a particular approach, it is not to be understood that he has an exclusive commitment to that approach, but that he represents the use of that particular type of criticism in the study of poetry. For example, Cleanth Brooks is an advocate and practitioner of formalist criticism. Yet in the very essay which G. J. and N. M. Goldberg choose to be the statement of the formalist position in their book, The Modern Critical Spectrum,[36] Cleanth Brooks says, "The poem has its roots in history, past or present. Its place in the historical context simply cannot be ignored."[37] But two paragraphs later he affirms clearly that "the formalist critic is concerned primarily with the work itself" (p. 74).

Two studies of modern critical practice which classify and present those practices are Hyman's The Armed Vision[38] and Goldberg and Goldberg's The Modern Critical Spectrum, already mentioned. Hyman establishes the following categories: evaluation, tradition, biography, folk criticism, psychology, scholarship, expense of criticism (eclectic

criticism), categorical criticism, criticism of interpretation, and criticism of symbolic action. The Goldbergs identify these types of criticism: formal analysis, socio-cultural milieu, tradition, biography, humanism, scholarship, psychology, and myth. The categories which this study will consider to be the major approaches to poetry in contemporary study come largely from the process of combining the Hyman categories with the Goldberg categories and expanding slightly the category which these two classifications call "scholarship." The categories thus established are as follows: formal analysis, scholarship, prosody, tradition, biography, psychology, folk criticism and myth, humanism, socio-cultural context, and categorical criticism.

Formal Analysis

T. S. Eliot pointed the way toward formalist criticism when he said, in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," that "honest criticism and sensitive appreciation are directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry."[39] This attitude was carried further by I. A. Richards who, according to Walter Jackson Bate, redirected "the interest of the critic to the text of the particular poem and the problem of analyzing it in terms of language, imagery, and metaphor."[40]

The formalist critic, as Cleanth Brooks says, has as his major concern the literary work itself.[41] He is concerned not with "the process of composition," but with "the structure of the thing composed" (p. 72). Brooks says:

> The formalist critic, because he wants to criticize the work itself makes two assumptions: (1) he assumes that the relevant part of the author's intention is what he got actually into his work; that is, he assumes that the author's intention as realized is the "intention" that

> counts, not necessarily what he was conscious of trying to do. And (2) the formalist critic assumes an ideal reader: that is, instead of focusing on the varying spectrum of possible readings, he attempts to find a central point of reference from which he can focus upon the structure of the poem or novel (p. 75).

Cleanth Brooks states the articles of faith he could subscribe to as a formalist critic, and that set of articles is a useful summary of the formalist critics' position insofar as that position can be generalized. Brooks' articles are the following:

> That literary criticism is a description and an evaluation of its object.
> That the primary concern of criticism is with the problem of unity--the kind of whole which the literary work forms or fails to form, and the relation of the various parts to each other in building up this whole.
> That the formal relations in a work of literature may include, but certainly exceed, those of logic.
> That in a successful work, form and content cannot be separated.
> That form is meaning.
> That literature is ultimately metaphorical and symbolic.
> That the general and the universal are not seized upon by abstraction, but got at through the concrete and the particular.
> That literature is not a surrogate for religion.
> That, as Allen Tate says, "specific moral problems" are the subject matter of literature, but that the purpose of literature is not to point a moral.
> That the principles of criticism define the area relevant to literary criticism; they do not constitute a method for carrying out the criticism (p. 70).

The formalist approach is represented in the study of Old English poetry by two works already referred to: Neil D. Isaacs' Structural Principles in Old English Poetry, 1968, and Bernard F. Huppé's The Web of Words: Structural Analysis of the Old English Poems Vainglory, The Wonder of Creation, The Dream of the Rood, and Judith. Isaacs' work is based on an attitude of respect for "the integrity of each poem studied" and the probing of the poem for "knowledge of its formal

pattern" (p. vii). His work "reflects the discoveries of versatility and virtuosity in the formal patterns of Old English poetry" (p. vii).

Isaacs comments further on his formalist approach:

> The critical approach of these chapters assumes that there is value in isolating formal patterns in art. The bias of a formalist critic is apparent throughout, though the formalism practiced is pragmatic rather than absolute. If art is defined as the imposition of form upon human experience, it does not necessarily follow that it is form itself which communicates; rather it is form which provides the possibility of communication. And it is the potential that counts, not the achievement (the inherent energy, not the measurable kinetic output) (pp. vii-viii).

Huppé's work is a close and greatly detailed analysis of the "elaborate structures, metaphors, and word creations" (p. xxi) in individual poems. He is concerned with the "essentials of structure" in the poems and works from the position that perceiving them in Old English poetry "is more like finding the way in a maze than it is like solving an equation" (p. xvi). He likens poetic structure to that of "the great signature pages of the Book of Kells, where the eye first sees only a maze of serpentine lines until suddenly the initial stands out in sharp relief" (p. xvi). His analysis of The Dream of the Rood stays almost exclusively within the maze of the poem as he traces the lines of its structure.

Scholarship

Scholarship as criticism, which is sometimes called historical criticism, consists primarily of research concerning the circumstances surrounding a literary phenomenon in its original and successive contexts. Scholarship makes its contribution to the study of poetry by the clarification of specific points of interest and significance in literature of the past or present.

A. S. P. Woodhouse, in his essay "On Historical Criticism of Milton," identifies eight specific areas of scholarly investigation in the study of poetry: (1) "The establishment of the true text," (2) critical estimate of the poet based on total production, (3) "the correction of former critics," (4) determination of the role of the poet himself in the work, (5) dating, (6) differentiating qualities in different works of a poet and determining why they are there, (7) comparative study, and (8) study of the poet's philosophy of life with regard to the poetry.[42]

Of literary scholarship, Hyman says:

> Its subdivisions are endless, and within any given sub-sub-subdivision a scholar can live out his years in productive content. It is the business of the scholar to produce an accurate text from a welter of corruptions, emendations, manuscript illegibilities, and even lacunae; to annotate a text in reference to its sources, its obscure meanings, its analogues, available historical records, and any other criteria that seem important; to equip the reader with an accurate biography of the writer, literary history in which his work is related to a context, and comparative study in which his work and context are discussed in terms of other work and contexts; and finally to prepare the endless paraphernalia of learning, the bibliographies, chronologies, concordances, word-counts, studies or theses clearing up individual points, new editions, translations, compilations, variorum or multiple-text editions, handbooks, anthologies, textbooks, and the rest (pp. 179-180).

Some specific outstanding examples of scholarship in the study of poetry are A. O. Lovejoy's The Great Chain of Being,[43] Joseph Warren Beach's The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth-Century English Poetry,[44] and John Livingston Lowes's The Road to Xanadu: A Study in the Ways of the Imagination, "a six-hundred page tracing of the sources of Coleridge's two great poems, 'The Ancient Mariner' and 'Kubla Khan.'"[45]

By far, most of the work done in the area of the study of Old English poetry has been from the scholarly approach in one or more of its many facets. Scholarly work in Old English poetry includes the

production of texts and notes such as Krapp and Dobbie's Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records and the volumes of the Early English Text Society; the establishment of the context and the continuity of Old English poetry as in Wardale's Chapters on Old English Literature, Greenfield's The Critical History of Old English Literature, and Wrenn's Old English Literature, all previously mentioned; examinations of particular aspects of culture which are significant in the poetry, an example being Huppé's Doctrine and Poetry which is a study of the religious frame of reference and justification for medieval Christian poetry--especially Old English Christian poetry--based on the poetics of Augustine;[46] and special studies of groups of poems such as Claes Schaar's Critical Studies in the Cynewulf Group which is an attempt to bring into the same view several major approaches to Old English study in the belief that insights will have application in different areas. The main approaches are (1) subject matter, (2) texts, textual criticism and interpretation and (3) style and manner (by far the most extensive).[47]

Prosody

Two areas of scholarly study of particular interest in the study of Old English poetry are those of prosody and the formulaic nature of Old English poetry. In the study of Old English metrics, Eduard Sievers,[48] late in the nineteenth century, established five types of Old English verses which have served as the basis for subsequent metrical analysis. Other scholars who have made contributions to this area of study are John Collins Pope,[49] J. A. Bliss,[50] Mary Lu Joynes,[51] Jane Marie Luecke,[52] Robert P. Creed,[53] Robert D. Stevick,[54] Constance B. Hieatt,[55] and Samuel Jay Keyser.[56]

Francis P. Magoun, Jr.[57] demonstrated the oral-formulaic nature of Old English poetry by applying to Old English poetry the concepts of oral-formulaic composition of poetry developed by Milman Parry and Albert Bates Lord in reference to Homeric and Yugoslavian poetry. Others who have helped to develop and clarify this aspect of Old English poetry are Robert D. Stevick,[58] Stanley B. Greenfield,[59] Robert E. Diamond,[60] and Donald K. Fry.[61]

A more inclusive study of Old English poetic method is Mary Q. Kelly's[62] attempt to establish an Old English poetics.

Tradition in Criticism

T. S. Eliot is the major "traditional" critic.[63] The traditional approach in criticism consists essentially of the critic's identifying what he considers to be the literary heritage of a specific genre or of the literature of his own period in general and then applying the standards of that tradition to whatever works he cares to criticize. Thus the tradition can be different for every critic who defines it. Hyman says that the key concepts in Eliot's criticism (impersonalism, irrelevancy of belief, emotion versus feelings, and the objective correlative) apparently

> arose out of the necessities involved in abstracting a tradition from its historical context and throwing it into ours, but in actual fact the process may have been reversed, and the concept of 'tradition' itself may have been developed to legitimize a personal necessity for an art that 'extinguishes' the personality, 'transmutes' suffering, and can 'use' beliefs without believing them (pp. 66-67).

Hyman is suggesting, then, that there is a strong subjective quality in the use of tradition, a factor which to some degree determines what that tradition will be seen to consist of. Hyman says:

> The driving necessity in Eliot's criticism would then seem to be the need to erect a scaffolding of objective, traditional, unemotional, and formal elements he could use to sustain himself, much the way Hopkins confessed that in the final period of his creative life only the rigidity of the sonnet form permitted him to write at all (p. 67).

Biographical Criticism

There are at least two critical attitudes concerning the meaning of biographical criticism. Hyman states one of them when he says, "The basic assumption of biographical criticism is that the chief clues to a man's work can be found in the study of his life, personality, and character" (p. 93). Van Wyck Brooks is Hyman's example of the biographical critic. Hyman states Brooks's position as follows:

> Brooks had finally worked his biographical method through to its logical implication: if criticism is the capturing of personality, if the critic writes only of authors for whom he has an affinity, and if writing is determined by the author's life, Brooks can encompass all of value in criticism by exploring the roots of his writings in his own life, by intuiting his own personality (p. 101).

Brooks's approach is seen in practice in his The Ordeal of Mark Twain, which has as its thesis:

> that Twain's bitterness "was the effect of a certain miscarriage in his creative life, a balked personality, an arrested development of which he himself was almost wholly unaware, but which for him destroyed the meaning of life." (p. 101)

The other approach to biographical criticism is that of E. M. W. Tillyard who says, "by 'personality' or 'normal personality' I do not mean practical or everyday personality, I mean rather some mental pattern which makes Keats Keats and not Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones."[64] The point which distinguishes Tillyard's approach from Van Wyck Brooks's is that he looks outside the literature for the biography whereas Tillyard finds it, at least largely, in the literature. Tillyard says,

"I believe we read Keats in some measure because his poetry gives a version of a remarkable personality of which another version is his life. The two versions are not the same but they are analogous" (p. 35).

In the study of Old English poetry, biographical information is almost totally lacking. The only poets whose names are known are Caedmon and Cynewulf. Of Caedmon we know only what we are told in Bede's Eccliastical History and of Cynewulf we know only what can be inferred from the poems he signed with runic letters.

Psychological Criticism

Psychological criticism as such concerns itself with what Wellek and Warren refer to as "the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature."[65] These psychological types and laws are derived mostly from the psychological theories developed by Freud and Jung.

Maud Bodkin's Archetypal Patterns in Poetry: Psychological Studies of Imagination[66] is the monumental critical work in psychological criticism. Bodkin's work is based on Jung's work, particularly on his concept of archetypes.

An example of Freudian psychological criticism is Ernst Kris's "Prince Hal's Conflict" which analyzes Prince Hal's behavior in terms of Freud's understanding of the individual's personality structure and its development involving the id, ego, and super-ego.[67]

Folk Criticism and Myth

Mythological or folk criticism interprets literary works in terms of the patterns which have their roots in folk literature and ritual or

myth. Jessie Weston's From Ritual to Romance,[68] which makes the grail legend "intelligible in terms of its genesis in a fertility cult,"[69] is the landmark work in this area of criticism. This interest in the study of Old English poetry is represented by Kemp Malone's Studies in Heroic Legend and in Current Speech, which is a collection of scholarly studies most of which are concerned with the legends involved in Old English poetry.[70]

Humanism

Humanism is the approach to literature which has as its major concern the preservation and the development of man's greatest potential as man. Douglas Bush, who is an advocate of this position, sums up his position as follows:

> . . . I believe that criticism should use all helpful means and methods for the study of literature; that historical knowledge and aesthetic analysis need to work together, and preferably in the same mind, not in different minds; that, our outer and inner worlds being what they now are, the scholar or critic cannot be content with the elucidation of works of art, central as that function is; that he has the further and traditional function of actively conserving the ethical and cultural inheritance that we are in danger of losing altogether; and that he has a social or (if the word be allowed) a missionary obligation, to labor to convert the heathen.[71]

Socio-Cultural Context

The socio-cultural context critic is concerned with the relationship between the context which produced and first received a particular piece of literature and the literature itself. David Daiches elaborates on this critical position:

> The universality of great works of fiction does not imply their ability to be isolated from all contexts but rather their ability to retain their value in many different con-

> texts. Indeed, there are here two different tasks for the maximum-context critic; one is to investigate the relation between the work and the world of which the author was a part and the other to inquire into the circumstances of appreciation by investigating the relation between the work and the worlds of which readers have been a part. We must always remember that an explanation of origins does not explain present value. . . . Confusion between origin and value is perhaps the commonest critical error of the present day.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> What the real work is and what gives the principle of organization to the whole can be certainly determined only by investigating the relation of the printed words to the civilization that produced them.[72]

Thus for Daiches knowledge of the context which produced a work is necessary in measuring the formalist question of concern about unity and value. The work itself cannot answer these questions.

Charles William Kennedy's Early English Christian Poetry is representative of the study of the relationship between Old English poetry and its socio-cultural context. In this work, Kennedy develops in detail the Old English Christian context for the translated poems he presents. He comments, "The greatest single source of inspiration for the vernacular poetry written in England from the seventh century to the Norman Conquest was found in the faith and culture of the Christian Church."[73] Many of the studies cited earlier in this chapter fall in this category of criticism, for example, John V. Fleming's "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism" and Robert B. Burlin's "The Ruthwell Cross, The Dream of the Rood, and the Vita Contemplativa," both previously cited.

Categorical Criticism

Categorical criticism is the attempt to establish a conceptual framework accounting for all the types of literary expression man has produced. According to John Oliver Perry, Northrop Frye in The Anatomy of Criticism

> has attempted to place in a theoretical framework all the modes of criticism and of literature. By categorizing the modes or kinds of genres of art Frye believes one can determine appropriate and useful criteria for handling each. For him meaning must be ascertained in almost the broadest possible context--the entire Western Christian-classical tradition, including its heretical and alienated members. Thus, "content" becomes inescapably structural, for the kinds of imagery and organizing ideas in a poem can be outlined in the meaningful terms provided by the Christian-classical heritage.[74]

The approach of René Wellek and Austin Warren in their Theory of Criticism is somewhat similar to the categorical approach, except that rather than categorizing the subject matter of literature, they organize and categorize the various approaches to literature including those discussed above in what they call an "organon of methods" (p. 19). The main body of their work consists in the clarification of the following approaches to literature: the extrinsic approach including literature and biography, psychology, society, ideas, and the other arts, and the intrinsic study of literature including mode of existence of a literary work; euphony, rhythm, and metre; style and stylistics; image, metaphor, symbol, and myth; the nature and modes of narrative fiction; literary genres; and evaluation.

Categorical criticism is seen in Old English studies whenever the attempt is made to classify the types of literature of the period as for example in David M. Zesmer's Guide to English Literature from

Beowulf Through Chaucer and Medieval Drama[76] or Kemp Malone's The Middle Ages, Vol. One of A Literary History of England.[77] This methodology is also evident when a work is approached in terms of its category as is the case in Margaret Schlauch's "The Dream of the Rood as Prosopopoeia," discussed above.

Thesis Statement

Each of these critical methodologies is in some way reductive, by its very nature limiting the study of a literary question under consideration. Even humanist and socio-cultural approaches, which seem very broad and inclusive, impose a controlling critical concept which would limit the range of investigation by that technique. Formalist criticism has a synthetic quality (see point two in Brooks's "articles of faith" found on page 13 of this work), but that synthesis is limited to interrelationships within a single work. When methodologies are reductive, synthetic relationships can be obscured, and it is the thesis of this study that such a phenomenon has taken place in the study of The Dream of the Rood. Because scholarship has focused on relatively isolated aspects of the poem, it has missed what is perhaps the most satisfactory explantion of the force of The Dream of the Rood. That force does not lie in its expression of any single factor of Christian life, or in the strength of the heroic elements present or even in a blending or unification of the Christian and the pagan, but rather in the simultaneous full operation in the poem of both of these elements in such a way that they create the tension which is the artistic life force of the poem.

What is lacking in the study of literature today is a critical methodology which will in itself encourage a synthetic and ever-

expanding approach to literature and particular literary works and still provide a workable, definable area of investigation of a particular literary question be it one of theory, period, genre, or work.

Chapter II will present a critical methodology which has as its center a concern for synthetic, dynamic interrelationships.

NOTES

[1]D. H. Haigh, "The Saxon Cross at Bewcastle," Archaeologia Aeliana, 4 (November, 1856), 173, as cited in Charles W. Kennedy, The Earliest English Poetry (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1943), p. 260.

[2]Stopford Augustus Brooke, The History of Early English Literature (New York: Macmillan, 1899), pp. 437-440, presents a detailed defense of the position that Cynewulf wrote The Dream, according to Kennedy, Earliest English Poetry, p. 261. F. E. C. Dietrich, Disputatio de Cruce Ruthwellensi (Marburg, 1865), pp. xvii-xxvi, is the first defense of Cynewulf's authorship of The Dream.

[3]Richard Paul Wulker, Grundriss, pp. 189-196, cited in Brooke, p. 437.

[4]This is the position of most recent scholarship, for example Stanley B. Greenfield, A Critical History of Old English Literature (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1965), p. 136; and C. L. Wrenn, A Study of Old English Literature (New York: Norton, 1967), p. 134.

[5]Carol Jean Wolf, "Christ as Hero in The Dream of the Rood," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 71 (1970), 202-203.

[6]Rosemary Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences on The Dream of the Rood," Medium Aevum, 27 (1958), 137.

[7]Robert B. Burlin, "The Ruthwell Cross, The Dream of the Rood and the Vita Contemplativa," Studies in Philology, 65 (1968), 43.

[8]Dom Peter Farina, "The Liturgical Background to The Dream of the Rood" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, St. John's, 1967), p. 13.

[9]J. A. Burrow, "An Approach to the Dream of the Rood," Neophilologus (Groningen), 43 (1959), 130, 132; and Burlin, p. 43.

[10]Bruce Dickins and Alan S. C. Ross, eds. The Dream of the Rood (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), p. 18.

[11]Greenfield, p. 136.

[12]H. R. Patch, "Liturgical Influences in the Dream of the Rood," PMLA, 34 (1919), 233-257.

[13]Dom Peter Farina, "The Liturgical Background to The Dream of the Rood," Dissertation Abstracts, 28 (1967), 627A. (Ph. D. dissertation, St. John's, 1966.)

[14]Sister Anna Mercedes Courtney, S. C., "The Dream of the Rood: A Doctrinal Commentary," Dissertation Abstracts, 24 (1963), 738. (Ph. D. dissertation, Fordham, 1963.)

[15]John V. Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," Traditio, 22 (1966), 43-44.

[16]John Canuteson, "The Crucifixion and the Second Coming in The Dream of the Rood," Modern Philology, 66 (1969), 293.

[17]Dom Peter Farina, "Waedum Geweordod in The Dream of the Rood," Notes and Queries, 14 (1967), 4-6.

[18]Barbara C. Raw, "The Dream of the Rood and its Connections with Early Christian Art," Medium Aevum, 39 (1970), 249.

[19]Dickins and Ross, pp. 13-16.

[20]Robert E. Diamond, "Heroic Diction in The Dream of the Rood," in Studies in Honor of John Wilcox by Members of the English Department, Wayne State University, ed. by Dayle A. Wallace and Woodburn O. Ross (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1958), pp. 3-7.

[21]Donald K. Fry, "Old English Formulaic Themes and Type-Scenes," Neophilologus, 52 (1968), 48-54.

[22]Edith Elizabeth Wardale, Chapters on Old English Literature (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), p. 181.

[23]Margaret Schlauch, "The Dream of the Rood as Prosopopoeia," in Essays and Studies in Honor of Carleton Brown (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1940), p. 30.

[24]Neil D. Isaacs, Structural Principles in Old English Poetry (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1968), p. 5.

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[26]Faith H. Patten, "Structure and Meaning in The Dream of the Rood," English Studies, 49 (1969), 385-401.

[27]Bernard F. Huppé, The Web of Words: Structural Analysis of the Old English Poems Vainglory, The Wonder of Creation, The Dream of the Rood, and Judith (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970), p. 75.

[28]M. J. Swanton, "Ambiguity and Anticipation in The Dream of the Rood," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 70 (1969), 425.

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[33]G. C. Britton, "Bealuwara Weorc in the Dream of the Rood," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 68 (1967), 275.

[34]W. F. Bolton, "The Dream of the Rood 9b: 'Engel' = Nuntius?" Notes and Queries, 15 (1968), 165-166.

[35]D. G. Scragg, "Hwaet/þaet in The Dream of the Rood, line 2," Notes and Queries, 15 (1968), 166-168.

[36]Gerald Jay Goldberg and Nancy Marmer Goldberg, eds., The Modern Critical Spectrum, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962).

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[41]Cleanth Brooks, "The Formalist Critic," The Kenyon Review, 13 (1951), 72.

[42]A. S. P. Woodhouse, "On Historical Criticism of Milton," in Goldberg, p. 234. Reprinted from PMLA, 66 (1951), 1033-1044.

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[54]Stevick, pp. 149-168.

[55]Constance B. Hieatt, "A New Theory of Triple Rhythm in Hypermetric Lines of Old English Verse," Modern Philology, 67 (1969), 1-8.

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[60]Robert E. Diamond, "Theme as Ornament in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," PMLA, 76 (1961), 461-468.

[61]Fry, pp. 48-54.

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[67]Ernst Kris, "Prince Hal's Conflict," The Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 17 (1948), 487-506.

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[69]Hyman, p. 124.

[70]Kemp Malone, Studies in Heroic Legend and in Current Speech, ed. by Stefan Einarsson and Norman E. Eliason (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1959).

[71]Douglas Bush, "The Humanist Critic," The Kenyon Review, 13 (1951), 92.

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CHAPTER II

SYSTEMS STUDY AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

This chapter will present systems study as a synthesizing critical methodology. The essence of systems study is its concern for interrelationships within whole entities. In literature those elements which are interrelated in the whole are often themselves parts of larger wholes which exist outside of literary works, a philosophical or metrical system for example. When an interrelation of elements in a work becomes an issue of interest, systems methodology can be of value by helping to define the nature of the elements involved and to determine the nature of the interrelations of those elements which are involved in the work.

In order to define the concept of system and describe some of the characteristics of systems study, an examination of some of the writing associated with general systems theory is helpful because it deals with the nature and behavior of systems in general. After the basic concepts of systems study have been discussed, a methodology for its application to the study of literature will be developed.

In the first volume of General Systems: Yearbook of the Society for General Systems Research, A. D. Hall and R. E. Fagan provide the following as a starting point in their attempt to state a definition of "system": "A system is a set of objects together with relationships

between the objects and between their attributes."[1] "Objects," say Hall and Fagan, "are simply the parts or components of a system, and these parts are unlimited in variety." Objects consist of physical parts such as atoms, switches, bones, and gases or "abstract objects such as mathematical variables, equations, rules and laws, processes, etc. . . . Attributes are properties of objects. . . . The relationships to which we refer are those that 'tie the system together'" (p. 18).

The matter of relationships of parts is a key concept in systems study. Ludwig von Bertalanffy's brief definition of system is that systems are "complexes of elements standing in interaction."[2] Organized complexity and strong nontrivial interactions are complementary concepts in the systems notion of relationships (p. 19).

This concern for interrelation of parts in a system is one of the major steps taken by modern science beyond previous scientific research. As von Bertalanffy says:

> While in the past, science tried to explain observable phenomena by reducing them to an interplay of elementary units investigatable independently of each other, conceptions appear in contemporary science that are concerned with what is somewhat vaguely termed "wholeness," i.e., problems of organization, phenomena not resolvable into local events, dynamic interactions manifest in the difference of behavior of parts when isolated or in a higher configuration, etc.; in short, "systems" of various orders not understandable by investigation of their respective parts in isolation (pp. 36-37).

Thus, a systems approach to the study of an entity will be concerned with the parts, the elements of the entity in question, but those parts will be studied in their interrelated condition rather than in isolation from other elements in the system.

The boundaries of an entity approached as a system are relative to the specific interest of the investigator. What he defines as his

original system--the entity under investigation--depends upon what he wants to investigate. This concept is related to the notions of universe, environment, original system, and subsystems. Here universe refers to "all things of interest in a given context."[3] In other words, in systems thought, universe is the system or entity under consideration together with everything that affects it and that it affects. The environment for a given system is, in the words of Hall and Fagan, "the set of all objects a change in whose attributes affect the system and also those objects whose attributes are changed by the behavior of the system" (p. 20). A system can be divided into subsystems which in themselves each behave as a system within the context of the original system. The subsystem may or may not be a miniaturized version of the behavior of the original system--but it does function as part of that original system (p. 20).

Now it is possible to clarify the general statement made earlier that the boundaries of a system are determined by the interest of the investigator. The entity which the investigator wants to have a clearer understanding of as a result of the investigation is the original system. For example, if a man wants to understand the mechanical operation of a car, the car itself becomes the original system. Driver, roads, and grades of gasoline are parts of the environment of that system. The electrical system of the car, the braking system, etc., are subsystems of the original system. But a shift in the interest of the investigator would result in a shift of the boundaries of the original system. If, for example, his real concern was for the electrical system, the other aspects of the car would become parts of the environment and the electrical system would be the original system. Interest could shift to

automobile transportation in which case automobiles, highway systems, etc. would no longer be environment, but components of the original system.

Another element of systems study which is determined by the investigator is which relationships of the elements of the universe in question are to be investigated in detail. Hall and Fagan take the attitude that

> the relationships to be considered in the context of a given set of objects depend on the problem at hand, important or interesting relationships being included, trivial or unessential relationships excluded. The decision as to which relationships are important and which trivial is up to the person dealing with the problem; i. e., the question of triviality turns out to be relative to one's interest (p. 18).

In terms of the broad definition of system and the basic concepts of systems study, it is possible to approach poetry as system. Anthony C. Winkler, in his book called Poetry as System, says the following: "A poem is a system. Like every other system it is made up of components which function in unison. And like any other system it is subject to wear and tear."[4] Winkler treats a poem as a system, and to a degree he treats poetry in general as a system which uses particular conventions at particular times to create what the poet believes to be poetry (p. 4). Winkler classifies poems into two large categories, those which point to objects and those which point to abstractions (p. 7), but he expands his categories to arrive at the following five-category classification: "Poems about object as object," "Poems about object as idea," "Poems about an 'abstraction'," "Poems using a speaker as object," "Modern poetry" (p. 8). Winkler develops in the main body of his book "a single and different approach to analyzing the poems falling under each category" (p. 8). But beyond this point, Winkler, while

saying much that is interesting and informative about poetry, says little that relates poetry to the systems view.

Claudio Guillén's Literature as System is a collection of essays working toward a new theory of literary history in which literature as a whole phenomenon is approached as a system on a world-wide, all-time basis. Guillén's work grows out of the frame of mind of comparative literature. He points out the weaknesses of comparative study, then works toward the concept of literature as system as a better way to approach the broad questions of literature. Guillén uses the metaphor of the civitas verbi--the verbal city--in which "a cultural whole or a literary system could be visualized, metaphorically speaking, as the verbal and imaginary equivalent of an ancient yet living, persistent yet profoundly changing city."[5] He continues, "The freedom and vitality of the great city are such that they succeed in assembling not only a variety of styles and ways of life but series of historical moments, layers of historical time" (p. 13). He elaborates the idea further: "Civitas verbi: artistic wholes and literary systems are, like great cities, complex environments and areas of integration" (p. 13). But Guillén says that beyond what he suggests in his image of the civitas verbi, and the fact that there are "relations of priority or of servitude . . . between the cities of stone and brick and the cities of the mind," his book "does not itself offer a system, but rather a process of inquiry and personal growth" (p. 13).

Guillén has done some valuable groundwork in developing concepts, definitions, and suggestions for the application of systems thought to the study of literature. Guillén says that:

> as far as the literary historian is concerned, a system is operative when no single element can be comprehended or evaluated correctly in isolation from the historical whole . . . of which it is a part (p. 378).

He comments further that his

> subject is a certain type of <u>mental</u> order, characterized by the functional importance of the relationships obtaining between its various parts . . . . A system is more than a combination or a sum of its components. It implies a certain dependence of the parts on the whole, and a substantial impact of the basic interrelationships (p. 378).

His principal models are linguistic and social, and he is "essentially indebted, above all, to Ferdinand de Saussure's idea of linguistic system" (p. 378). That Guillén thinks of literary system in broad, inclusive terms is indicated in his statement that "a metaphor, a poem, and a system are like concentric spirals rising and tending toward meaningful order" (p. 12).

The possibility of treating both poems and poetry as systems calls for the usual decision in a systems approach as to what is going to be the original system to be considered. Such a decision establishes the focal point which determines what is to be considered subsystems and what is to be considered environment. The universe of the system is the system itself plus its environment.

It would be possible to take the poetic process as the primary system to be studied and consider individual poems as products or components of that system, each of which enters back into the system as new perspective and potential for the creation of new poems. The poet draws from what is available to him in the system and its environment (ideas, metrics, language, cultural constructs, etc.) and by the creative power of his own mind synthesizes new statements of the matter in

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the poetic universe and thus creates new perception and enriches the potential of that universe, particularly the poetic system operating within it.

Now it is possible to be more specific and to exemplify what the systems approach to poetry is by describing in some detail what a full-scale systems study of Old English literature would be.

Limits of a system are established by the investigator with regard to the specific concern of the investigation. In a hypothetical systems study of Old English literature, the boundary of the system under investigation would be inclusive of all the extant writing in Old English from the time of the Anglo-Saxon invasion about 449 to the Norman Conquest in 1066. The primary general questions would be what is that literature like, what does it consist of. The methodology for arriving at the answers to these staggering questions would be as follows.

First, the investigator defines clearly and as specifically as possible the limits of the system. This limitation has been begun in the original statement of the system under investigation, Old English literature from 449-1066. But more specifically it must be determined by the investigator what he means by "Old English" and what he means by "literature." The question of Latin writing arises. Is the Latin writing of an Anglo-Saxon to be considered Old English literature? Bede's Ecclesiastical History is a good object in point. Is it Old English literature when he writes it? Does it become Old English literature when King Alfred has it translated into Anglo-Saxon? Or is it ever really Old English literature? The question is largely a matter of definition. This hypothetical study will answer the question by defining Old English literature as original works written in Anglo-Saxon before

1066. The question of Bede's History has been answered in the negative, but the definition is still much broader than any usual definition of literature because it still includes legal documents, letters, and chronologies written in Anglo-Saxon. Are they literature? The question could be answered several ways, but for this exemplary study, the decision is made to define literature as writing in which there is artistic merit in the form of that writing and value beyond the literal meaning of the content. The system thus excludes legal documents, letters of a purely business nature, chronicles which merely record events. It would include all writing in poetic form and prose writing with concern for aesthetic form and appeal such as homilies.

The second matter to be established is the one of components of the system. If the system is Old English literature as defined above, the components are ideally all the nontrivial elements which work together in that system to determine its nature as a whole entity. Some of the obvious elements would be the language of the works; the prosody, including metrics and other established literary conventions; the types or genres of the literature; the content of the works such as legends, philosophical or religious thought structures; and social and political structures illustrated or assumed by the works. The procedure at this point would be to establish, as fully yet briefly as possible, the nature of each of these components with reference to historical development only when such reference is necessary for clarification of the component as it exists in the Old English literary system, and with reference to elements outside of the system only when such reference is necessary to clarify the nature of a component in the system. However, from

time to time, such reference may become quite extensive. But the criterion for investigation outside the system should be clarification within the system.

Directly related to the matter of components is step three, gaining a clear grasp of the environment of the system, that is the larger context in which the system exists. This context is important to the nature of the system because it is what gives the system the raw materials by which it operates and it is what receives the product of the system. It must be remembered that a system is as much a part of its environment as a component is a part of the system. The levels of the system universe do not operate in isolation, but in constant interaction with each other. The definition of a system is made not to cut it off from its interfunctional relationships, but as a methodology of study. It must also be remembered that interrelation or interfunctioning of elements is an essential concept of systems thought and the methodology insists on a constant accounting for the nature of components in their interfunctioning state--not in isolation which is the tendency of most analytical methodologies. The environment of Old English literature would include all the nontrivial elements and relationships which made life in England between 449 and 1066 what it was. Of particular interest to literature would be the languages involved in that setting, any writing in any of those languages, any traditions involved in the lives or thinking of the people, their political, social, religious, and philosophical structures. Concern for the historical development of any one of these points would be limited to that which is necessary for clarification of that element as it exists in the environment of the system under consideration. And the concern for any of the elements in that environment

is limited to what is helpful in the clarification of the nature of the system under consideration or of any of its components or their interrelationships.

The accomplishment of such a study of Old English literature would be monumental, but it would be possible because of the controlling factor of Old English literature as a system. Without such a controlling factor, a study of contexts and relationships is either endlessly wandering with one point leading to another without control, or it is spasmodic and random. It seems safe to say that a carefully controlled comprehensive systems study of Old English literature would be a notable contribution to literary scholarship and would be of value to the understanding of the Old English period from other points of view as well as because of the concern for interrelationships which is characteristic of systems study. But such a full systems study is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

It is possible, however, to limit the system under consideration by focusing on what was one of the components of the system of Old English literature, that is, one of the works in that literary system. The literary system then becomes part of the environment of the system under consideration which is a particular poem. The various significant elements of the poem are the components of the system. Thus The Dream of the Rood could be defined as a system of simultaneously interacting components, the most important of which would be the language of the poem, the metrics and other poetic conventions in the poem, the Christian thought in the poem, and the heroic or pagan Germanic elements in the poem. The environment of this system would be the Old English literary system and all the significant factors which

affected it and which it affected. But even this study would be larger in scope than what is appropriate for this dissertation.

Further limitation is necessary and can be accomplished within the systems frame of reference. Since in a systems study the elements to be considered in detail are determined by the investigator with regard to his interest in the subject at hand, it would be appropriate in this study to consider The Dream of the Rood as a system, but focus in detail on two subsystems of particular significance in the poem, namely the Christian and the Germanic elements.

The distinctive feature of this study is that it clarifies its particular point of scholarship in terms of systems relationships. Within that systems context, constant attention is given to the interrelationships of parts in an ever-expanding frame of reference, while at the same time, the point of immediate interest is clearly defined and established as the center of the study. Systems methodology provides a way to control the simultaneous desires to be both expansive and particular. This study takes into account previous scholarship in Old English and church history, and relies heavily upon it in establishing the subsystems to be dealt with. Its focus will be where a particular problem arises, the interrelationship between the Christian and the Germanic elements in The Dream of the Rood. Scholars have studied in detail and have gained insight into each of these elements in The Dream, but they have failed to grasp the dynamic character of the interrelationship of these elements in the poem which a systems study has a particular advantage in demonstrating.

The procedure to be followed will be to establish the Christian and Germanic elements as subsystems of the poem and then to clarify

the nature of each by reference to the Christian and Germanic systems which exist in the environment of the poem. To the extent that it is possible, each of the components will be considered not in isolation, but as it exists in the complexity of the poem itself. And finally the interrelationship of these two components of the poem will be explicitly developed to demonstrate that it is in the tension which results from the interaction of those two subsystems that the life of the poem exists.

NOTES

[1]A. D. Hall and R. E Fagan, "Definition of System," General Systems: Yearbook of the Society for General Systems Research, 1 (1956), 18.

[2]Ludwig von Bertalanffy, General System Theory (New York: George Braziller, 1968), p. 33.

[3]Hall and Fagan, p. 20.

[4]Anthony C. Winkler, Poetry as System (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1971), p. 1.

[5]Claudio Guillén, Literature as System: Essays Toward the Theory of Literary History (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 12.

CHAPTER III

THE GERMANIC SUBSYSTEM IN THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

It is the burden of this chapter to establish the Germanic subsystem of The Dream of the Rood. Here, Germanic refers to all aspects of the poem which are the product of, or are highly significant because of, the Germanic racial experience reflected in the poem. These aspects include language, major poetic techniques (including metrics, traditional Germanic poetic diction, oral-formulaic techniques and the use of type-scenes which grow out of the poetic diction and formulas) and the socio-cultural elements.

All of these elements operate together in what is here considered as the Germanic subsystem of The Dream of the Rood. Ultimately, they cannot be separated from each other nor from the Christian subsystem of the poem. As each of the elements (or actually subsystems) in the Germanic subsystem is considered, there will be constant concern for how it functions in relation to other elements. The major emphasis of this section of the dissertation will be on the socio-cultural element of the Germanic subsystem because that is the point of the most intense interaction between the Germanic and the Christian subsystems of The Dream. After a rather cursory examination of the linguistic and poetic elements of the Germanic subsystem, the chapter will focus on the identification of the Germanic socio-cultural element

in the poem, its relationship to early Germanic culture as that culture can be reconstructed by scholarship, and finally by an explicit statement of the nature of the Germanic subsystem of The Dream in the light of this investigation.

Language

The language of The Dream of the Rood as it exists in the only surviving manuscript of the poem, found in the Vercelli Book dating from perhaps about 970, is the language of the West Saxons as it was spoken at the time the manuscript was written.[1] There are a number of Anglian (Mercian and Northumbrian) forms in the poem (wergas, bestemed, bledum, sceddan, and frined)[2] which some scholars such as Dickins and Ross point to as evidence for its northern and relatively early composition (p. 18) but which other scholars[3] account for as being part of the poetic diction of the West Saxons. A. Campbell says:

> There seems to have been, in fact, a 'general OE poetic dialect', mixed in vocabulary, phonology, and inflexion, and an originally dialectally pure poem, which achieved general popularity, would in transmission become approximated to this poetic dialect, while new poems would be written down from the beginning with considerable indifference to dialectal consistency.[4]

Therefore, it is possible for a scholar to use or to discount linguistic evidence in the question of dating and locating, depending upon when he wishes to date or locate the composition of the poem. Obviously, the poem cannot be later than the date of the manuscript, and it cannot reasonably be dated earlier than the generally accepted beginning point of Anglo-Saxon Christian poetry with the composition of Caedmon's hymn in 680 as mentioned by Bede in his Ecclesiastical History.[5] The position taken in this present study, in agreement with that of Wrenn[6]

and others, is that the poem existed in an expanded form (expanded in relation to the portion of the poem on the Ruthwell Cross) much like the Vercelli Book version by some time in the mid-eighth century and that it was a Northumbrian product, but that the poem was somewhat modified, perhaps mostly in terms of dialect, in the process of its use and transcription in Wessex in the last half of the tenth century.[7]

However, at least a portion of the poem, that which coincides with the runic inscription in the Northumbrian dialect on the Ruthwell Cross, reaches back to near the time when Anglo-Saxon Christian poetry first came into existence--late seventh or early eighth century.[8]

The inescapable linguistic fact concerning The Dream of the Rood as it is known today is that its language is essentially that of late tenth-century Wessex, as is the case with most extant Anglo-Saxon literature, regardless of the date or location of its original composition, for it is the manuscripts produced in the West Saxon scriptoria which almost alone have survived. And so far as the main features of the Anglo-Saxon language are concerned, it would make little difference if the manuscript happened to be in the Northumbrian dialect, for the differences occur mostly in spellings and to a much lesser degree in word forms. Campbell points out that

> while there is no objection to the designation of the two main Old English dialect types as Anglian [Northumbrian and Mercian] and West Saxon, the distinctions between them mostly developed in England, owing to the considerable isolation of the various parts of the country from one another in early times. Similarly, the differentiation of Kentish from other dialects is due to the isolation of the area rather than to the descent of the inhabitants from the Jutes (pp. 3-4).

Pyles also points out the relatively slight difference among Old English dialects.[9] The major features of the language subsystem of The Dream

as they will be sketched here on the basis of the West Saxon manuscript would not, therefore, be appreciably different from what they would be if they could be sketched on the basis of a Northumbrian version of the poem, assuming that such a version did once exist.

Two of the most important features of Old English as a language of poetry are its inflectional and accentual systems. Anglo-Saxon is a member of the Indo-European language group. The languages in this family are traced back philologically to a hypothetical common language assumed to have been spoken in north-central Europe in prehistoric times.[10] That language would have been highly inflected with a system making clear distinction among eight different cases for the noun. In the linguistic process which led from that hypothetical language to modern English which has almost no inflectional system, Anglo-Saxon can be said to be about half-way, that is, about half inflected in relationship to Indo-European and modern English. Anglo-Saxon has four distinct cases for nouns (nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative) with a remnant of a fifth one, the instrumental, which is usually like the dative in form. But many of the case endings in this system serve for more than one form, indicating that the language is moving in the direction from more to less inflection. The appearance of prepositions to indicate functions is suggestive of the same direction of movement toward a noninflected language. In Old English a noun had one of three genders--masculine, feminine, or neuter--depending not upon the sex of the referent, but upon grammatical considerations. This is grammatical gender. Nouns are also classified as strong or weak. Strong nouns have more distinct case endings in their declensions than do weak nouns. There are also two basic verb systems called strong and weak.

Strong verbs undergo a change in an internal vowel to indicate tense, whereas weak verbs do so by adding a suffix. Adjectives are also declined strong or weak but not because a particular adjective is considered strong or weak, as in the case of nouns, but in response to its particular environment in a particular sentence. Generally, if another word, such as an article, indicates grammatical information about a noun, the adjective is declined weak. Otherwise it is strong. The definite article, the demonstrative pronouns, and personal pronouns are all "fully" inflected showing case, gender and number. Some of the personal pronouns show not only singular and plural number, but also a dual. Because of the relationships indicated in the inflectional system, the function of prepositions is not as critical in Old English as in modern English; but prepositions do play an important role in Old English, often providing clarification where the inflectional indicators of relationships are ambiguous. Adverbs, conjunctions, and expletives in Old English function much as they do in modern English.

The Anglo-Saxon inflectional system is sufficiently operative to allow for a much more flexible word order than is permitted in modern English, which depends heavily upon word order for the indication of grammatical function of words. The inflectional system in Old English poetry allows the poet to arrange words and phrases to gain particular effects and still maintain grammatical sense because of the inflections, whereas in modern English the same arrangement of words would be grammatically incoherent.

Another significant point concerning the Old English language with regard to poetry is that the accentual system of Germanic languages has a fixed accent on the root syllable of a word, in most cases

the first syllable. If the word begins with a prefix, the accent falls on the first syllable after the prefix. If the word has as many as four syllables, there will be a secondary accent. If the word is compound, the accents fall very much as they would if the words were treated separately, but there would be more stress on the root syllable of the first part of the compound than on the root syllable of the second part.

Metrics

This accentual system is important in Old English metrics. A normal line of Old English poetry consists of two half lines called verses a and b. Each verse has two major stresses and a varying number of unstressed syllables. There is a brief pause, a caesura, between the two half lines indicated by a blank space in the modern printed version of a poem and by a dot or spacing or not at all in the manuscripts. These verses are the basic units of composition in Old English poetry. The verses of a line of Old English poetry are linked together by a pattern of alliteration in which the sound of the first major stress in the b-verse occurs in at least one of the two major stress points, often both, in the a-verse.[11] It is by this system of alliteration that lines and verses can be determined even when the manuscript gives no other indication of where these poetic units divide. The manuscripts are written so as to get the greatest number of words on a given piece of expensive vellum, and space is not wasted by giving one line of manuscript to one line of poetry as in modern editions.

Sievers[12] demonstrated late in the nineteenth century that Old English verses are of five types with regard to the accentual pattern. He called these types A, B, C, D, and E. A verses are basically

strong--weak--strong--weak in accentual pattern, sécgan wýlle for example.[13] B verses are weak--strong--weak--strong, hwæt ́me gemaétte for example. C verses are weak--strong--strong--weak, on lýft laédan for example. D verses are strong--strong--weak--weak, wáes módsèfa for example. E verses are strong--weak--weak--strong, Crist wæs on róde for example. This analysis serves as the basis of much Old English metrical study; but when questions of the refinement of this analysis arise, especially in terms of verses which are longer than normal or in questions of the significance of the amount of time taken to speak a given verse, there is a continuing academic debate among Old English scholars.

John Collins Pope is representative of the group who are concerned with the time factor and measure the rhythm of Old English poetry in the same way that one measures the rhythm of music. He says that normal lines move at a 4/8 time but that hypermetric lines move at the twice-as-slow 4/4 time. The rhythm of hypermetric verses "resembles the normal in structure but is twice as long . . . . Each half of this slower measure is equivalent to one normal measure and can assert a quasi-independence."[14]

Since The Dream of the Rood has an extremely high proportion of so-called hypermetric verses (64 verses out of 311), it seems advisable to give that matter some detailed attention.

Robert Stevick demonstrates on the grounds of "the syntax, the semantics, and the rhetorical or aesthetic probabilities"[15] that each of the "extended" lines of The Dream should be treated as two normal lines. He would print the hypermetric lines as two lines instead of one. These lines would be "normal" in appearance. The alliteration often

supports this lineation; but where it does not, Stevick feels that the other considerations override the lack of support from alliteration (p. 159).

A more satisfying solution to the problem is found in the approach to measuring Old English meter proposed by Jane Marie Luecke in an article, "Measuring the Rhythmic Variations of Old English Meter."[16] Her concept is that the important stresses in verses of Old English are what she calls "phrase stresses," which determine the sense of the phrase and are accompanied by the suprasegmental phoneme of pitch. Two of these phrase stresses occur in each verse of Old English poetry and may be accompanied in a given verse by other words which carry various degrees of word stress but not the primary phrase stress. By such a measuring technique, the Old English poet can be seen to be following closely the convention which dictates that each verse have two major stresses, but by varying the length of those verses by means which sometimes involve other words with word stress, the poet creates an artistic variety in lines which adhere to the stress patterns, but bend away from it in the actual lines of poetry. By measuring the extended lines of The Dream of the Rood according to Luecke's method, the regular alliteration is preserved and with it the special effect of the long lines which Stevick would eliminate. Luecke points out that the long lines occur in Beowulf at places where the content is slow in action or thoughtful, as in Hrothgar's sermon. That slow, thoughtful motion is surely most appropriate to the content of the extended lines in The Dream which recount portions of the vision of the cross and the narrative of the crucifixion as told by the cross. Both cross and dreamer express awe in these portions of the poem. When the cross begins to state its present condition, the normal lines only are used, and they

continue through the dreamer's statement of his hope for glory, through the relating of the return of the victorious Christ to heaven, which closes the poem. The variation represented by the use of extended and normal lines appears to be a part of the poet's art in creating appropriate effects in relation to the subject matter of various portions of the poem.

Oral-Formulaic Composition

The verses of Old English poetry are not only regular in the metrical and alliterative pattern, they also demonstrate types of patterns in the content of the phrases which make up the verses. This is due, as Francis P. Magoun[22] has demonstrated, to the oral-formulaic character of Old English poetry. He says that "since these ancient Germanic singers were unlettered, their poetry must have been oral, and its diction, accordingly, must have been formulaic and traditional."[17] Quoting Milman Parry who established the oral-formulaic theory in relation to Homeric poetry, Magoun states "that a formula is 'a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea'" (p. 194). Magoun proceeds on the assumptions that oral poetry "is composed entirely of formulas, large and small," (p. 190) and that "the traditional language of unlettered singers develops very, very slowly and over a long period of time and is created to deal only with traditional themes with which singers and audiences are in the main familiar" (p. 204). He also points out "that an oral poem until written down has not and cannot have a fixed text . . . ; its text, like the text of an orally circulating anecdote, will vary in greater or lesser degree with each telling" (p. 190). The

process of becoming a singer, a scop, is that of learning the main outline of existing narratives and also the formulas used to relate such stories. Each performance is a kind of spontaneous recreation of the song as the singer puts the formulas together to make the narrative. When a new glorious deed is performed, the poet can celebrate it in song by substituting new names and places and circumstances in the old formulaic patterns and thus relate a new story usually without the creation of any essentially new formulaic patterns.

The same situation holds true when Christian material becomes the content of poetry. Magoun points out that "the Christian themes that the singers apparently liked best to sing about are in the main stories involving extraordinary and exciting adventures and events . . ." (p. 206). This is the type of material they had formulas to fit. Magoun comments that "expression of general conceptions of theology, dogma, and Christian doctrine is notably rare in the Christian songs . . . even in that most beautiful song of meditation and devotion, The Dream of the Rood" (p. 207). He attributes this absence "to a lack of formulas capable of adaptation to such ideas" (p. 208).

The concept of formulaic composition has been extended to larger elements of poetry in what Donald K. Fry calls "type-scenes" and "themes." A type-scene is a narrative entity which is a scene often repeated in oral poetry such as battles and banquets. With each of these type-scenes certain formulas are regularly associated. But the type-scenes are not limited to word for word repetition, or even to a fixed order in which the circumstances and the formulas appear. A theme is very much like the type-scene except that it is not related to

a particular scéne, but rather to a repeated concept or circumstance such as exile.[18]

In summary, then, scholars have demonstrated that the Anglo-Saxon poet was working with a highly inflected language which gave him freedom in the word order he used, that his language had a system of fixed accents which served as the basis for the metrical system of his poetry, that there were certain metrical patterns which emerged as the result of the convention of having two of these accented syllables in each half line of poetry, and that the accents or stresses in a half line are best understood to be phrase stress--a concept which allows for a measuring of the "hypermetric" verses which is consistent with the measuring of the "normal" verses. It has also been noted that this poet was working in an oral-formulaic system which provided him with ready-made poems and the basic formulaic units which he could arrange to make new songs, and that even in the matter of extended narration, there were type-scenes and themes which provided the poet with a conventional collection of ideas and formulas to be used in recounting a battle, a banquet, a voyage, an exile, etc.

Germanic Socio-Cultural Subsystem

The elements of the Germanic socio-cultural system are seen in the content of The Dream of the Rood most clearly in the presentation of Christ as a warrior, chief, and king of a company of people dependent upon him; of the cross as an obedient retainer and also as a practical treasure; of exile and the lamentation associated with it; of the suggestion of old deeds to be avenged; and of the role of the dreamer as potential scop with the charge to relate in words what he has seen.

Christ as Warrior, Chieftain, and King

Christ appears as a Germanic warrior hastening to the cross as to combat:

Geseah ic þa frean mancynnes
efstan elne mycle þaet he me wolde on gestigan (ll. 33b-34).

He strips himself before the combat:

Ongyrede hine þa geong haeleð (l. 39a).

The Lord bravely climbs up on the high gallows to free men:

Gestah he on gealgan heanne,
modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa he wolde mancyn lysan
(ll. 40b-41).

He is referred to as the God of hosts:

Geseah ic weruda god
þearle þenian (ll. 51b-52a).

Men come from afar to the fallen prince:

Hwaeðere þaer fuse feorran cwoman
to þam aeðelinge (ll. 57-58a).

The corpse of the Lord is laid out and beheld in Germanic fashion:

Aledon hie ðaer limwerigne, gestodon him aet his lices heafdum,
beheoldon hie ðaer heofenes dryhten (ll. 63-64a).

The men sang a dirge for the Lord after he was placed in the tomb:

Ongunnon him þa sorhleoð galan
earme on þa aefentide (ll. 67b-68a).

The singing of the dirge is Germanic, the tomb burial of the corpse is not. The Germanic custom was to burn the body, an action which is precluded here by the events in the poet's narrative.

The Lord arose to help men:

Deað he þaer byrigde, hwaeðere eft dryhten aras
mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe (ll. 101-102).

The end of the poem pictures the Lord returning to heaven as a warrior returning victoriously to his home after an heroic expedition:

> Se sunu waes sigorfaest on þam siðfate,
> mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,
> gasta weorode, on godes rice,
> anwealda aelmihtig, englum to blisse
> ond eallum ðam halgum þam þe on heofonum aer
> wunedon on wuldre, þa heora wealdend cwom,
> aelmihtig god, þaer his eðel waes (ll. 150-156).

Other features of Christ suggestive of a Germanic prince include the following: Christ has the power of judgment. He is the one "se ah domes geweald" (who has the prerogative of judgment) (l. 107b). Like a Germanic warrior, Christ will ask where the man is who will follow the Lord's example and taste death as he did:

> Frineð he for þaere maenige hwaer se man sie,
> se ðe for dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde
> biteres onbyrigan, swa he aer on ðam beame dyde
> (ll. 112-114).

Those whom the Lord has helped will gather at a feast as the Lord's folk:

> þaer is dryhtnes folc
> geseted to symle, þaer is singal blis (ll. 140b-141).

The dreamer prays for the Lord's friendship:

> Si me dryhten freond (l. 144b).

The Lord is giver of life and home:

> He us onlysde ond us lif forgeaf,
> heofonlicne ham (ll. 147-148a).

Cross as Retainer and Practical Treasure

The cross appears as a loyal retainer of Christ, the Lord. The cross says that it did not dare bend or break against the Lord's word:

> Þaer ic þa ne dorste ofer dryhtnes word
> bugan oððe berstan (ll. 35-36a).

The cross stands fast in obedience, although it says it could have slain the fiends:

Ealle ic mihte
feondas gefyllan, hwaedre ic faeste stod (ll. 37b-38).

The idea that the cross must stand fast is again repeated in lines 42b-43:

Ne dorste ic hwaedre bugan to eordan,
feallan to foldan sceatum, ac ic sceolde faeste standan.

The cross lifted up the powerful king, the Lord of heaven, and again it is stated that the cross did not dare to bow:

Ahof ic ricne cyning,
heofona hlaford, hyldan me ne dorste (ll. 44b-45).

The cross did not dare injure any of the enemy:

Ne dorste ic hira naenigum sceddan
(l. 47b).

After the king's fall, the cross bowed humbly to the men close at hand:

Sare ic waes mid sorgum gedrefed, hnag ic hwaedre þam
secgum to handa,
eadmod elne mycle (ll. 59-60a).

Wounds and Blood on Cross

The cross receives wounds in the service of his Lord:

Þurhdrifan hi me mid deorcan naeglum. On me syndon þa
dolg gesiene,
opene inwidhlemmas (ll. 46-47a).

eall ic waes mid straelum
forwundod (l. 62b).

And there are many references to the blood or moisture with reference to blood on the cross including the mention of the alternating covering of treasure and blood (ll. 22b-23 quoted below), the fact that the cross began to bleed on its right side (ll. 19b-20a):

þaet hit aerest ongan
swaetan on þa swiðran healfe.

that the cross and the Lord were besmeared together and that the cross was made wet with Christ's blood:

Bysmeredon hie unc butu aetgaedere. Eall ic waes mid
blode bestemed,
begoten of þaes guman sidan (ll. 48-49a).

that the soldiers left the cross to stand drenched with moisture (of blood):

Forleton me þa hilderincas
standan steame bedrifenne (ll. 61b-62a).

The cross is buried in a pit, but later the Lord's thanes find it and adorn it with gold and silver:

Bedealf us man on deopan seaþe. Hwaeðre me þaer dryhtnes
þegnas,
freondas gefrunon,
ond gyredon me golde ond seolfre (ll. 75-77).

It is at this point in the narrative sequence that the cross appears no longer as a retainer, but more as an adorned, practical treasure personified. Early in the poem, before the cross has spoken and as the dreamer is describing it, it is said to be adorned with gold and gems:

Eall þaet beacen waes
begoten mid golde. Gimmas stodon
faegere aet foldan sceatum (ll. 6b-8a).

Geseah ic wuldres treow,
waedum geweorðode, wynnum scinan,
gegyred mid golde; gimmas haefdon
bewrigene weorðlice wealdendes treow (ll. 14b-17).

As the dreamer continued to look at the cross, he saw that it was sometimes covered with the flowing of blood and sometimes with treasure:

hwilum hit waes mid waetan
bestemed,
beswyled mid swates gange, hwilum mid since gegyrwed
(ll. 22b-23).

Exile and Elegiac Tone

Another Germanic element in The Dream of the Rood is the elegiac theme related to the concepts of exile in this transitory life. When the cross ceases to speak, the dreamer is aware of his solitary condition and from that point until the end of the poem (ll. 122-156), the tone of the poem is elegiac. The poet is alone:

> þaer ic ana waes
> maete werede (ll. 123b-124a).

His soul is ready for departure; he has endured a long time of weariness:

> Waes modsefa
> afysed on fordwege, feala ealra gebad
> langunghwila (ll. 124b-126a).

He does not have many powerful friends on earth, for they have gone from the joys of the world and sought the king of glory and live now in heaven:

> Nah ic ricra feala
> freonda on foldan, ac hie ford heonon
> gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him wuldres cyning,
> lifiaþ nu on heofenum (ll. 131b-134a).

And he hopes each day for the time when the cross will take him where there is much happiness, the joy in heaven where the lord's people are seated at a feast and enjoy many other pleasures of heaven:

> ond ic wene me
> daga gehwylce hwaenne me dryhtnes rod,
> þe ic her on eordan aer sceawode,
> on þysson laenan life gefetige
> ond me þonne gebringe þaer is blis mycel,
> dream on heofonum, þaer is dryhtnes folc
> geseted to symle (ll. 135b-141a).

Potential Scop and Adam's Old Deed

The last point to be considered in this initial identification of the Germanic element in The Dream is the command of the cross to the dreamer to tell men in words the sight that he had seen and that it is the cross of glory that God almighty suffered on for mankind's many sins and Adam's deed of old:

> Nu ic þe hate, haeleð min se leofa,
> þaet ðu þas gesyhðe secge mannum,
> onwreoh wordum þaet hit is wuldres beam,
> se ðe aelmihtig god on þrowode
> for mancynnes manegum synnum
> ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum (ll. 95-100).

The role that the cross is asking the dreamer to play is precisely the role of the scop in Germanic culture, for it is in the words which the scop says that the fame of those who perform great deeds is known.

Adam's old deed is of significance here, because old deeds are often provocative of present conflicts in Germanic culture.

Major Aspects of the Germanic Socio-Cultural System

Two of the major sources for knowledge of early Germanic culture are Julius Caesar's Memoirs of the Gallic War, 51 B.C. and Tacitus' Germania, A.D. 97-98. According to E. A. Thompson, Caesar gives a view of the Germanic people in a time when they were still more or less nomadic depending more on sheep and cattle than agriculture for their subsistence. There was no permanent ruler over a very large segment of the Germanic people, rather separate clans banded together under a temporary leader in a time of crisis but otherwise lived as separate clans under a tribal patriarchal system.[19] By the time of

Tacitus there were two types of leaders in Germanic social organization, a military leader who was elected for his prowess and bravery but who had military (and perhaps some religious) duties only, and a king who was also elected but must be of noble birth. His duties were not limited to military matters (pp. 32-36). Also by Tacitus' time the council of leading men which seems to have existed earlier only in wartime had a peacetime function too, although it was limited to rather minor matters which, however, affected the people as a whole. The more important issues were handled by another council, the assembly of warriors (p. 31).

The developments which took place between the time of Caesar and the time of Tacitus are changes in degree rather than kind. In both times, the most important aspect of life was war, and it was the determining factor in all else.

Battle

War was such an essential part of the Germanic man's life that he never went unarmed. Tacitus says, "No business, public or private, is transacted except in arms."[20]

Actual battle is the test of valor. Again, Tacitus comments,

> On the field of battle it is a disgrace to the chief to be surpassed in valour by his companions, to the companions not to come up to the valour of their chief . . . . The chiefs fight for victory, the companions for their chief (p. 112).

To gain by battle was more honorable to the Germanic warrior than to gain by labor. "He thinks it spiritless and slack to gain by sweat what he can buy with blood" (p. 113).

In battle, according to Tacitus, the men "are either naked or only lightly clad in their cloaks" (p. 105). Francis Owen points to the

desire for freedom of movement as the reason for warriors removing excess clothing before battle.[21] The horsemen use only spear and shield, and the infantryman uses spear, shield, and several javelins which he can shower on the enemy from a great distance.[22] Only a few warriors, according to Tacitus, use swords, lances, breast-plates or helmets (p. 105). They also carry "figures and emblems taken from their sacred groves" (p. 107).

Before battle the warriors rouse their courage by chanting in a loud roar. Tacitus reports, "What they aim at most is a harsh tone and hoarse murmur, and so they put their shields before their mouths, in order to make the voice swell fuller and deeper as it echoes back" (p. 103). The din is added to by the lamenting of the women and the wailing of the children who are close by to encourage their husbands and fathers and to give them praise (p. 107). The battle is launched with the infantry arranged in a wedge shape supported by the cavalry (p. 106). The encounter is a fray of hurling and hacking from behind shields which are placed side by side to form a shield-wall of protection. For a warrior to abandon his shield and place of fighting "is the supreme disgrace" (p. 106). Wounds acquired in battle are marks of honor, and the warriors take their wounds to their mothers and wives to whom they look for the highest praise. And the women "are not afraid of counting and examining the blows, and bring food and encouragement to the fighting men" (p. 107). The Germanic warriors would carry off their dead and wounded even during the rage of battle (p. 106).

After a battle, the victorious warriors would plunder the remains of the defeated enemy and prepare to celebrate the victory with feasting, drinking, exchanging treasure, and listening to the scop.

Owen says that there were three kinds of war in the early Germanic age: feuds, raids, and wars. The feuds are related to vengeance as discussed below. War involved the immediate fate of the whole tribe, and every man was expected to fight and had been trained to do so from childhood. The raids were organized by an individual chieftain for a specific adventure such as adding to his treasures or spying on an enemy to gain knowledge which would be valuable in the future. The chieftains called for volunteers to go with them, and their expeditions usually did not involve the whole tribe. It is in relationship to such raiding groups that the comitatus relationship based on sworn loyalty to the leader was developed. It was the prototype of the war band in heroic poetry. But the same intense loyalty was given to the king of a tribe as he led the way into full-scale war in the most dangerous position at the head of the wedge.[23]

The ideals and practices of the comitatus have become stylized in Germanic heroic poetry and actually form a system in themselves. This idealized comitatus system has as its nucleus the loyalty sworn by the warriors to the leader, and the leader's obligation to his followers.

Loyalty

Michael D. Cherniss defines loyalty as "the principle of personal allegiance between individual warriors" and says that it is "the primary concept upon which the heroic society depicted in Germanic heroic poetry is built."[24] Loyalty and related concepts imply, in Cherniss' words, "the entire system of comitatus relationships" (p. 35). The two primary manifestations of loyalty are the bond "between warriors of approximately equal rank" and the "bond between warriors and their

social 'betters,' especially between retainers and their lords" (pp. 35-36). Gummere says that "loyalty is the key-note of Germanic life and Germanic virtue."[25] "Generosity and the foremost place in valor are the duty of the prince; absolute fidelity and devotion mark the clansman" (p. 264). As important as courage is to the Germanic warrior, Gummere says that in the comitatus, courage is "no more prominent than fidelity, loyalty, and truth" (p. 261).

All of the positive values in Germanic life, especially in the idealized form of it found in heroic poetry, were dependent on the mutual loyalty between retainer and lord. These include the desire for glory and its outward manifestation, treasure; the companionship shared in feasting, drinking mead, and listening to the scop sing his wondrous tales of glory; and the opportunity to fight again and win more glory. All of these things would be lost by the warrior who was not loyal. The two most severe breaches of loyalty--the killing of one's kinsman and the forsaking of one's lord in battle--were punishable by exile, a fate even worse than the death likely to be suffered as the penalty for killing the kinsman or lord of another.

Glory

Glory is the goal the Germanic warrior seeks to attain by means of his loyalty and valor in the service of his lord. This glory consists of "his reputation for greatness, his fame on this earth during and after his own lifetime."[26] A man seeks glory in battle either as conqueror or the valiantly defeated. The important thing is that he fight bravely and loyally be he lord or retainer.

There are three major manifestations of the glory that a warrior might win in battle. The first is a good reputation among men which hopefully will be encouraged by a scop's singing of the glorious deeds performed to the credit of the warrior. The second manifestation of glory is the tangible proof of his valor in the treasure which the lord bestows upon him for his loyal service. In the third place, if a warrior is killed in valiant battle, he achieves a place of honor in Valhalla, the abode of the warriors who fall in battle.[27] The afterlife, in general, was an uncertain affair for most Germanic people, although according to Gummere there was a definite belief in it.[28] In the case of the fallen warrior, however, there seems to be no doubt. Instead of a fear of the life after death, for a warrior the fear was of dying in one's bed. The only proper death for the Germanic warrior was a violent one (p. 202).

As mentioned above, the scop played an important role in the Germanic comitatus. He was the means by which noble deeds became recognized both at home and abroad and the means by which their fame could be carried into the future. He had the skill of composition of narrative poetry capable of relating famous deeds by oral-formulaic technique described above. The singing of the scop would be part of the celebration after battle.

One last point associated with battle and the glory gained thereby is the coming of people from far and near to see the results of the battle. An example of this in Beowulf is the coming of people "feorran ond nean/geond widwegas" (from far and near, around wide stretched ways) (ll. 839b-840a),[29] to see Grendel's arm and tracks as evidence of Beowulf's victory.

Vengeance

Vengeance is another key element in the Germanic heroic way of life. The abstract concept of loyalty becomes concrete in heroic vengeance, which is "essentially that aspect of the concept of loyalty which manifests itself in action in the principal activity of heroic life, physical combat."[30] A Germanic warrior is duty-bound to avenge the death of his kinsman or his lord, if his lord is killed in battle. This duty to kinsman is by birth and to lord by oath. If, as Cherniss notes, there is a conflict in these loyalties, the one to which his allegiance is sworn or is sworn first supersedes all others (pp. 36-38).

Cherniss points out that the heroic tradition treats "vengeance as a positive value" (p. 106) and that the

> accomplishment of revenge is accompanied by joyous exultation on the part of those who are sympathetic to the avenger's cause and, more important, by a sense of justice and propriety which attaches itself to the abstract idea of vengeance itself (pp. 105-106).

But because the carrying out of vengeance could ultimately lead to the annihilation of entire tribes, the system of wergeld evolved, whereby a feud could be settled by payment of gold to those who would avenge the death of the slain man. This type of system was in existence in the first century, as Tacitus indicates:

> A man is bound to take up the feuds as well as the friendships of father or kinsman. But feuds do not continue unreconciled. Even homicide can be atoned for by a fixed number of cattle or sheep, and the satisfaction is received by the whole family (21, p. 118).

The wergeld system established a material value for every man's life depending on his social position, which in turn was relative to the amount of land he owned when land ownership became a more fixed system.[31] Edith Elizabeth Wardale's Anglo-Saxon Institutions[32]

includes a detailed study of the Anglo-Saxon monetary system and the wergeld system which was closely tied to it. It was a significant move in the conversion of England, that Augustine's religious men were made a part of English society and recipients of its protection by being worked into the wergeld system and being assigned monetary value which a person who killed a religious was bound to pay the church.[33]

Treasure

The wergeld system and the basic comitatus system with its emphasis on combat involve the concept and function of treasure in the Germanic heroic system. Cherniss develops the idea that treasures "give moral value to their possessors; that they are, in fact, the material manifestations or representations of the proven or inherent worthiness of whoever possesses them."[34] In this frame of reference, wergeld can be seen not as a replacement of a man, but as an acknowledgement of his worth (p. 124). The plundering of a slain enemy which was a practice of Germanic warriors takes on a new significance in the light of Cherniss' thesis. "The treasure which a warrior gains by plundering is the concrete representation of the honor which he has won in battle and is, indeed, the only tangible proof of the honor and esteem to which his deeds entitle him" (pp. 131-132).

The exchange of treasure is an integral part of the Germanic heroic system. The gifts which are exchanged between the thanes and their lord are a part of the bond which holds the tribe or comitatus together. Cherniss says that "these gifts reflect the loyalty and veneration between the members of the comitatus" and that "without the tokens

of acknowledged respect the communal structure would probably break down" (p. 141).

There are two types of treasure in heroic culture: decorative treasure such as gold, silver, and gems which have no utilitarian value and practical treasure such as swords, helmets, and armor which have utilitarian value. Practical treasures can take on personal attributes, including given names (p. 143). and may be rewarded for virtue (the same as a noble warrior) by adorning them with gold and gems (p. 144). This concept has particular significance in The Dream in relation to the silver, gold, and gems which adorn the cross. This point will be further developed later in this chapter. It is also interesting in this regard that Cherniss specifically states that the "veneration of riches runs . . . counter to Christian tradition" (p. 145), but that "in Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry earthly possessions, un-Christian though they may be, are always presented in positive terms, as things to be desired and sought after by worthy warriors" (p. 146).

Cherniss makes explicit the interrelationship between the concepts of loyalty and treasure in that "much of a warrior's honor and reputation depends upon his unfaltering loyalty to his lord, and this loyalty is symbolized by the treasure which he possesses" (p. 145).

Exile

In the system under consideration here, exile is the worst thing which can befall a man because exile deprives him of all the benefits of heroic society. Cherniss defines exile as "the state of being alone, without a lord, without retainers, and usually without human companionship of any kind" (p. 150). The main reason for the misery of the exile

is that he is cut off from the pleasure enjoyed by the comitatus in the hall (p. 157). "Even death" says Cherniss, "is preferable to the miserable life of the exile" (p. 167).

Cherniss points out that "while Christian exile is conceived of in positive terms as a voluntary rejection of the vanities of the world, Germanic exile is never voluntary and is always an abhorrent state" (p. 172).

Religion

The pagan religion of the Anglo-Saxons was relatively weak by the time Christianity was brought to them in the seventh century. Their paganism was mostly a matter of cultic practice with not much serious concern for what lay beyond the ritual.[35] This is witnessed to by the relative ease with which the old cultic places and ceremonies were Christianized according to Gregory's wise policies concerning the relationship between Christian and pagan religions. Bede says that Gregory's directions were for the missionaries to tear down idols but to preserve the temples as places to worship God.[36] Even the slaughter of cattle, which was a part of pagan cultic practice, could continue but in a modified form, the cattle being used for food rather than sacrifice (I-30, p. 87). These cultic remnants are shadows of a Germanic religion common to all Germanic people on the continent and most readily accessible to the modern scholar in the Verse and Prose Eddas of Norse literature.

The chief deities of this religion are, according to Brian Branston,[37] Tiw (the old Sky Father originally the Creator), Woden (who took Tiw's place as chief among the gods), Thunor (weather god,

son of Woden), Frigg (the goddess who seems to be both "wife to the chief god who in turn is the sky" (p. 127) and "Mother Earth" (p. 127), who is also seen as both daughter and wife to Woden). Other gods are Nirod, Frey, and Freya (a father and son and daughter) and Balder (a god who dies a bloody death and is mourned by many). These gods appear only incidentally in Anglo-Saxon literature because of the Christian pens through which the surviving literature had to flow. But because of their significance for this study, Woden, Wyrd, and Balder will be given some detailed consideration.

Woden was considered by the Anglo-Saxons to be the chief god, and "he was for them both a god of wisdom and a god of the dead" (pp. 87-88). His wisdom was magical in nature. As a god of wisdom, Woden is associated with the Old English charm, the Nine Herbs Charm. Woden is also closely associated with the runic alphabet which was first developed magically for divination. In the Old Norse tradition, Woden is considered to be the discoverer of runes. In both Old English and Norse traditions, Woden was considered a wise magician. There is also evidence in both traditions that Woden "by self-sacrifice won knowledge for the benefit of men" (pp. 90-92).

According to Norse sources,[38] Woden, as god of the dead, was ruler of Valhalla, the hall of the slain. Warriors "who fall in battle are his sons by adoption."[39] In some traditions he leads the dead warriors in an unending cycle of fighting and feasting. Those slain one day in battle rise to fight again the next. The supply of meat and mead for feasting is limitless (pp. 94-96). But this mythological structure was not developed by the Anglo-Saxons. They associated Woden particularly with death by hanging because it was by this means that victims

were offered to Woden. This sacrifice is associated with cross-roads (p. 93). The Old English concept was that

> Woden stalked the rolling downland, one-eyed and wise beyond all knowing in cloak and hood when the weather was fine, stopping at crossroads to recognize his own dangling from the gallows; but on black and stormy nights he racketed across the sky at the head of his wild hunt of lost and noisy souls (p. 104).

It is possible, of course, that the Anglo-Saxons did have a tradition of Woden as leader of the glorious dead, but that aspect of Woden-lore does not find expression in surviving Anglo-Saxon literature as it does in Norse literature.

That Woden was a highly revered god in Anglo-Saxon myth is attested to by the fact that many Anglo-Saxon kings trace their lineage to Woden. Bede says that Hengist and Horsa, the first chieftains of the Anglo-Saxon invaders of Britain, "were the sons of Wictgils, whose father was Witta, whose father was Wecta, son of Woden, from whose stock sprang the royal house of many provinces" (I-15, p. 56). That a man be a descendent of Woden was a primary qualification for kingship. Thus royal blood and kinship to Woden are synonymous.

Wyrd was originally a Germanic goddess of fate or destiny who was more important in literature as a depersonalized concept of destiny than as a goddess. Wyrd is particularly interesting in Anglo-Saxon literature because of the relationships and parallels between the concept of Wyrd and the Christian God. Perhaps the most interesting and best known reference to the Anglo-Saxon concept of Wyrd and its relationship to God appears in Beowulf at lines 2525-2527 in which Beowulf is talking to his people before going to fight the dragon. He says:

> ac unc [furdur] sceal
> weordan aet wealle swā unc wyrd getēod,
> Metod manna gehwaes.
>
> But it must happen to us at the wall as fate (Wyrd) assigns to us, God (Metod, measurer, governor) of each of men.

But earlier in the poem, God is presented as being superior to fate. Hrothgar is telling of the terrible disaster which has befallen his country. He says that his hall-troop, his band of warriors, is diminished, that fate (Wyrd) has swept them off in Grendel's terror. But that God could easily restrain that desperate foe of such deeds.

> hie wyrd forswēop
> on Grendles gryre. God ēaþe maeg
> þone dolsceadan daeda getwaefan! (Beowulf, ll. 477b-479)

Balder is of particular interest among pagan Germanic gods because it is in him that the Germanic people saw the closest parallel in their religion to Christ of the new religion. Branston outlines the essential factors of the Balder myth as follows:

> (1) a beautiful young man loved by all and especially his goddess mother Frig, (2) his impending death, of which he gets warning by dreams, is somehow connected with the Doom of the Gods, (3) in spite of an appeal to and promises from all Nature, the young man suffers a bloody wound and dies, (4) he goes down into the Underworld and stays in the power of Hel its Queen, and (5) the success of a further appeal to all Nature to weep for his return is thwarted by one evil creature's refusal (p. 154).

Branston points to the parallels between the Balder myth and many of the features of The Dream of the Rood as evidence that the Old English knew the Balder myth (p. 161).

Funeral Practices

Finally, in this examination of the Germanic cultural system in terms of which the Germanic subsystem of The Dream operates

Germanic funeral customs should be considered, not only because there is a funeral in The Dream, but also because the way people treat death often indicates much about their general life patterns and thoughts.

Gummere says that generally "the heathen races have mostly preferred to burn their dead, while Christians incline to burial" (p. 308), and that "there can be no doubt that the heathen Anglo-Saxons first burnt, and then buried their dead" (p. 315).

As attested to by the funeral pyres as in Beowulf, for example, the dead are burned either singly--as in the case of Beowulf (ll. 3138-3155)-- or in groups as when Hnaef the Dane was burned with his nephew at his side (ll. 1114-1117). The scene in which Beowulf's body is burned gives several specific details associated with the funeral. The pyre was made on the earth. Helmets, shields, and bright corslets were hung about it. Beowulf was laid in the midst of the pyre by the lamenting warriors. Emphasis is placed on the size of the blaze and its devouring of the hero's body. There is more lamenting. Heaven swallowed the smoke (ll. 3138-3155). After the burning the men made a barrow or mound where men could see it from the sea. It took ten days to build the mound, and when it was completed the men placed in it treasure (ll. 3156-3165). Then the warriors rode around the mound reciting an elegy praising their friendly lord (ll. 3169-3182).

Burial by placing the body in a ship equipped with treasure and practical supplies was also practiced by the Germanic people. Beowulf has an example of this type of burial with reference to Scyld (ll. 29-52). The burial ship discovered at Sutton Hoo in 1939 bears witness to the same type of burial, except that the Sutton Hoo ship remained on land

probably as a monument and the body of the person for whom it was built was apparently "buried" elsewhere, very likely at sea.[40]

Gummere concludes that "the whole logic of the primitive funeral was based on a supposition that the spirit sundered from the body lived after death" (p. 335).

The Germanic socio-cultural system described here, while it had some stylized aspects due to the conventions of the poetic tradition, was no mere idealistic abstraction to those who lived in Anglo-Saxon England. The Anglo-Saxons came first to Britain in raiding parties along the Saxon shore even when Rome exercised power in Britain. After Rome withdrew, the Anglo-Saxons came as a band of warriors to protect the Romanized Celts against the barbaric Scots and Picts from the North. But the Anglo-Saxons themselves became the enemy of the Celts and took most of Britain for themselves.

As the Anglo-Saxons settled permanently in England, seven kingdoms, called the heptarchy, emerged. Each was ruled by a king who maintained an army and ruled with the aid of advice from his council. There was a pattern of shifting power among the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms as first one and then another would gain military supremacy of one or more of the other kingdoms.

Kent was the first kingdom to enjoy this overlordship, in the late sixth and early seventh centuries. Kent's greatest king, Ethelbert, claimed Woden as his ancestor, his people practiced the heathen Germanic religion, and the priests of the religion were taken carefully into consideration by Ethelbert when he was converted to Christianity in 597.[41]

Power shifted briefly to East Anglia, then for a longer period to Northumbria, which held supremacy during most of the first half of the eighth century. Under one of its greatest kings, Edwin, Northumbria became Christian; but again there is an account of the deliberation among king, councilmen, and pagan priest in the process of Edwin's becoming Christian.[42] Mercia was the next kingdom to gain military superiority in England under Offa who ruled for most of the last half of the eighth century.

In the ninth century, Wessex was beginning to assert power when the Danes conquered all the kingdoms of England except Wessex, which was severely reduced and threatened with conquest. In the tenth century Alfred the Great, King of Wessex, drove the Danes not out of England but to a limited area in the North called the Danelaw. Alfred was the greatest of all Anglo-Saxon kings, both as military leader and scholar.

The significance here of this historic sketch is that it demonstrates the importance of power established and maintained by military leadership of a king. The pattern of leader, warriors, and council continued in England much as it had been practiced on the continent. Robert Diamond[43] points to the significance of the military way of life which continued throughout Anglo-Saxon history alongside the religious way of life which developed mostly in the monasteries with the conversion of England to Christianity.

Two Anglo-Saxon poems which come from the tenth century and record heroic events from that period witness to the concept that the heroic tradition was a very live ethic at that time. The poems are The Battle of Brunanburh and The Battle of Maldon, recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle under the years 937 and 991, respectively.

Concluding Statement of Germanic Subsystem

This final section of Chapter III will make explicit what has been implied in the preceding two sections, that is the extent to which Germanic concepts or heroic concepts are operating as a subsystem in The Dream of the Rood.

The language of the poem is obviously Germanic. Robert E. Diamond has demonstrated that the diction of the poem is in the Germanic heroic tradition by pointing out the frequency of such heroic phrases as strange feondas--strong enemies, geong haeleþ--young warrior, strang and stiþmod--strong and courageous, for example (p. 3). Diamond also points to the number of verses in The Dream (67 out of 311) which appear elsewhere in Old English poetry at least once as "strong indication that the poem was composed in the traditional oral-formulaic style" (pp. 5-6).

Carol Jean Wolf demonstrates the presence in The Dream of two extended formulaic structures: the type-scene of "the approach to battle" and the "theme" of "the hero on the beach." The Dream contains six of the nine elements which Fry indicates to be characteristic of the "approach to battle" type-scene: "advance, haste, intent, command, preparation and attitude."[44] Wolf points out that these are enough elements to constitute a type-scene citing Fry's observation that never are all of the elements present in a particular "approach to battle" type-scene of the seventeen such passages which he analyzed (p. 206).

The "hero on the beach" theme as first identified by David K. Crowne contains the following element: a hero on the beach, his retainers, flashing light, and the beginning of a journey. Subsequently it was established that the same themes could occur with the hero in a doorway

or in any position between two worlds.[45] Wolf sees Christ in the sepulchre as the occurrence of a "hero on the beach" theme. Christ is in a position "between two worlds, life and death," there is "the presence of the extraneous light in the bright stone of the sepulchre," the retainers are there in the form of the disciples who moved Christ into the sepulchre, and two journeys are about to be begun--the apostles' and Christ's (pp. 207-208). Wolf believes that "the 'approach to battle' type-scene enhances the Rood-poet's presentation of the crucifixion as a battle" and that "the 'hero on the beach' theme specifically reflects the heroism of Christ both by emphasizing His position as a warrior-lord and by associating Him once more with the heroic figures of the traditional stories" (p. 208). Wolf's observations with regard to poetic technique are closely related to the Germanic culture as a subsystem in The Dream.

The basic comitatus structure with Christ as the lord of loyal retainers is perhaps the most obvious Germanic socio-cultural factor in the poem. His lord-like deeds are seen in his approach to the cross as a brave young warrior, stripped for battle, his rising to help his people, his giving of gifts (in this case, life) and a home, and his returning to his land to celebrate with his folk at a banquet. He is accompanied by faithful retainers, specifically the cross who is faithful to the lord's command, those who come from around the world to behold his corpse, and those who sing the dirge for him and give him burial. The burial of an uncremated body is contrary to the basic Germanic tradition, but such a burial is a significant factor in the narrative of Christ's death. All the other details surrounding his death and burial are in accord with the way Germanic warriors would treat a fallen war-lord.

Of course his people are again seen in their feasting in the lord's home which he makes their home too.

The central action of the poem, the crucifixion, is seen as a battle. Besides those aspects related to Christ as warrior-lord, those who crucify him are presented as foes.[46]

The cross receives wounds and is covered with a vast amount of blood in the battle and is honored for that service by being adorned with silver, gold, and gems. It is customary in criticism of The Dream to see, as Wolf does, the cross as a retainer (p. 203); but it functions just as fully as a practical treasure--very much like a noble sword. It was the instrument by whose strength Christ's deed was done. The cross says that it raised up the King of Heaven and did not dare to bow (ll. 45b-46). The cross is now not only honored with treasure as the outward sign of that honor, but it also has magical powers--specifically the power to heal. This circumstance is parallel to the magic powers associated with famous swords in the Germanic tradition.[47]

The dreamer himself is in the position of a German exile. He recognizes the cross as the way to get to the lord's home (heaven), but in his present state he is cut off from that joy and longs for it. Associated with this aspect of the poem are many of the words and phrases associated with the elegiac mood in the Germanic tradition, particularly the statement that he no longer has powerful friends, that this life is a fleeting existence, and that he longs to be a part of the happiness in the lord's hall.

But until the dreamer can go to that heavenly gathering, he is to relate the story of the cross to men much as a scop would do to enhance the glory of the cross.

It should be clear by now that an Anglo-Saxon merely by virtue of being a part of the Germanic tradition and familiar with Germanic poetry would hear operating in The Dream a system very familiar to him--even if he knew little or nothing of Christianity. The major characters of the poem--the cross, Christ and the dreamer--all function in terms drawn from Germanic tradition, and the action of the poem in terms of battle, feasting in a hall, exile, and the endowment of honor for faithful service are equally familiar within the Germanic heroic frame of reference, as are other details discussed above. The very language and poetic structures would add to the hearer's reception of the poem as being very Germanic indeed.

NOTES

[1]George Philip Krapp, ed. The Vercelli Book, Vol. II, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1932), p. xvi and ed. Bruce Dickins and Alan S. C. Ross, The Dream of the Rood (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), p. 13.

[2]Dickins and Ross, p. 13.

[3]Dom Peter Farina, "The Liturgical Background to The Dream of the Rood (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, St. John's, 1967).

[4]A. Campbell, Old English Grammar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 10.

[5]Bede, A History of the English Church and People, Tr. Leo Sherley-Price, rev. by R. E. Latham (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1970), IV-24, pp. 250-253.

[6]C. L. Wrenn, A Study of Old English Literature (New York: Norton, 1967), pp. 136-137.

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[23]Owen, p. 121.

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[33]Margaret Deanesly, The Pre-Conquest Church in England (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1961), p. 56.

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[35]Gummere, pp. 342-346.

[36]Bede, I-30, p. 86.

[37]Branston, p. 73.

[38]Particularly the verse and prose Eddas.

[39]Branston, p. 96.

[40]Branston, pp. 81-82.

[41]Bede, I-25, pp. 69-70.

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CHAPTER IV

THE CHRISTIAN SUBSYSTEM IN THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

In order to deal with the Christian element of The Dream of the Rood as a subsystem in the poem, it is necessary to identify that element clearly. It appears most specifically in the statements and circumstances concerning the cross itself, statements about Christ, sin, judgment, eternal life, and to a small degree, the Christian view of the order of the universe. Another aspect of the Christian element of the poem which will be developed later in the chapter is the solitary, ascetic condition of the dreamer in the poem.

The cross, which is the central image of The Dream, is a central symbol of Christianity, especially the Christianity of the time when the poem was written.[1] The statements and situations concerning the cross in the poem which have direct theological significance are the following: That men are freed (redeemed) by what Christ did on the cross:

> Gestah he on gealgan heanne,
> modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa he wolde mancyn lysan
> (ll. 40b-41).

that the cross opens the way for the proper life of man:

> aerþan ic him lifes weg
> rihtne gerymde, reordberendum (ll. 88-89).

that God tasted death on the cross:

> Deað he þaer byrigde (l. 101a).

that one who bears the cross in his breast will attain the kingdom through the cross:

> Ne þearf ðaer þonne aenig anforht wesan
> þe him aer in breostum bereð beacna selest,
> ac ðurh ða rode sceal rice gesecan
> of eorðwege aeghwylc sawl,
> seo þe mid wealdende wunian þenceð (ll. 117-121).

References to the cross with strong theological implications include these:

That the cross is a victory-beam:

> Syllic waes se sigebeam (l. 13a and l. 127b quoted below).

that in the former agony, the cross bled on the right side:

> Hwaeðre ic þurh þaet gold ongytan meahte
> earmra aergewin, þaet hit aerest ongan
> swaetan on þa swiðran healfe (ll. 18-20a).

that the cross had a covering which alternated between blood and treasures:

> Geseah ic þaet fuse beacen
> wendan waedum ond bleom; hwilum hit waes mid waetan bestemed,
> beswyled mid swates gange, hwilum mid since gegyrwed (ll. 21b-23).

that Christ climbed voluntarily upon the high gallows:

> Gestah he on gealgan heanne (l. 40b).

that the cross has healing power:

> ond ic haelan maeg
> aeghwylcne anra, þara þe him bið egesa to me (ll. 85b-86).

that the dreamer prays to the cross when he is alone:

> Gebaed ic me þa to þan beame bliðe mode,
> elne mycle, þaer ic ana waes (ll. 122-123).

that visiting the cross is the joy of the dreamer's life:

> Is me nu lifes hyht
> þaet ic þone sigebeam secan mote
> ana oftor þonne ealle men (ll. 126b-128).

and that the dreamer's protection is straight to the cross:

> ond min mundbyrd is
> geriht to þaere rode (ll. 130b-131a).

Equally significant with what the poem affirms about the cross is what it says about Christ. In reference to Christ on the cross, the poem says, "(þaet waes god aelmihtig)," (l. 39b). Christ is called "frean mancynnes" (Lord of mankind) (l. 33b). Christ is referred to as the son near the end of the poem where it is stated that "the son was victorious on that expedition" which brought many saints to heaven:

> Se sunu waes sigorfaest on þam siðfate,
> mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,
> gasta weorode, on godes rice (ll. 150-152).

The poem says that after tasting death "the Lord arose with great might to help men":

> Deað he þaer byrigde, hwaeðere eft dryhten aras
> mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe (ll. 101-102).

that "the Lord ascended to heaven" after his resurrection and that "the Lord will come again to visit mankind on Doomsday":

> He ða on heofenas astag. Hider eft fundaþ
> on þysne middangeard mancynn secan
> on domdaege (ll. 103-105a).

The poem also states that "the Lord freed us and gave us life, a heavenly home":

> He us onlysde ond us lif forgeaf,
> heofonlicne ham (ll. 147-148a).

The dreamer prays for the Lord's friendship:

> Si me dryhten freond (l. 144b).

The Dream of the Rood contains statements concerning sin. It says that "Almighty God suffered on the cross for man's sins and for Adam's old deed":

þaet hit is wuldres beam,
se ðe aelmihtig god on þrowode
for mancynnes manegum synnum
ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum (ll. 97b-100).

and echoes the idea in lines 145-146:

Si me dryhten freond,
se ðe her on eorþan aer þrowode
on þam gealgtreowe for guman synnum (ll. 144b-146).

It is also significant that early in the poem the dreamer is painfully aware of his sinfulness in contrast to the bright glory of the cross:

Syllic waes se sigebeam, ond ic synnum fah,
forwunded mid wommum (ll. 13-14a).

Judgment is also treated in the poem which says that "the Lord will come to judge on Doomsday" (ll. 103-105 quoted above), that he has "the prerogative of judgment":

þaet he þonne wile deman, se ah domes geweald (l. 107).

that the Lord will judge men according to what they have earned in this fleeting life:

anra gehwylcum swa he him aerur her
on þyssum laenum life geearnaþ (ll. 108-109).

that on Doomsday, the Lord will ask where the man is who for the Lord's name will taste death as the Lord did on the cross:

Frineð he for þaere maenige hwaer se man sie,
se ðe for dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde
biteres onbyrigan, swa he aer on ðam beame dyde
(ll. 112-114).

that everyone will fear the Lord's word at judgment:

Ne maeg þaer aenig unforht wesan
for þam worde þe se wealdend cwyð (ll. 110-111).

that men will not know what to say to the Lord at judgment:

Ac hie þonne forhtiað, ond fea þencaþ
hwaet hie to Criste cweðan onginnen (ll. 115-116).

But the one who bears the cross in his breast does not need to be afraid (ll. 117-118, quoted above).

The Dream deals with heaven and eternal life. The dreamer's friends have already gone to live in heaven:

> Nah ic ricra feala
> freonda on foldan, ac hie forð heonon
> gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him wuldres cyning,
> lifiaþ nu on heofenum mid heahfaedere,
> wuniaþ on wuldre (ll. 131b-135a).

And the dreamer looks forward to the day when the cross will take him from this life to heaven:

> ond ic wene me
> daga gehwylce hwaenne me dryhtnes rod,
> þe ic her on eorðan aer sceawode,
> on þysson laenan life gefetige
> ond me þonne gebringe þaer is blis mycel,
> dream on heofonum (ll. 135b-140a).

In lines mentioned earlier, it is stated that the Lord gave us life, a heavenly home (ll. 147-148) and that he ascended to heaven after his resurrection (l. 130).

Other references in the poem suggest a Christian cosmology and order of beings. Lines 9 and 10 refer to angels who are beautiful through preordained condition:

> Beheoldon þaer engel dryhtnes ealle,
> faegere þurh forðgesceaft (ll. 9b-10a).

The halige gastas of line 11 is a reference to saints, literally holy people or spirits. Phrases such as maere gesceaft (glorious creation, l. 12), þam þe þaer bryne þolodan (those who there suffered burning, l. 149), and middangeard (earth, literally middle yard or land, l. 104) together with the references to heaven suggest a God-created universe with a heaven above, a hell below, and an earth between. (However, the doctrine of creation is not mentioned directly in the poem.) Finally,

the special place of Mary in the poet's Christianity is stated with reference to the cross when the cross states that men now honor the cross over all other wood just as the Lord's mother, Mary herself, God honored over all other women:

> Hwaet, me þa geweorðode wuldres ealdor
> ofer holmwudu, heofonrices weard!
> Swylce swa he his modor eac, Marian sylfe,
> aelmihtig god for ealle menn
> geweorðode ofer eall wifa cynn (ll. 90-94).

In summary, then, the following Christian beliefs can be stated on the basis of the contents of The Dream: Man lives in a middle-world between heaven and hell, guilty of his own and Adam's sin. God Almighty, the Lord, came to this world, suffered on the cross to free man from his sin and open to him the proper way of life and the way to heaven. He tasted death but arose, ascended to heaven, and will return on Doomsday to judge men according to what they have done in this life. Judgment will be a fearful experience, but those who have the cross in their breasts will go to heaven to dwell in glory with their friends and with the Lord.

For clarification of the significance of these elements in the Christian subsystem of the poem and for an expanded grasp of that subsystem, it will be most helpful to see how these elements operate within the Christianity of the time when the poem was written. As a result of that investigation, some elements in the poem which do not appear at first to be specifically Christian, such as the condition of the dreamer himself whose aloneness is emphasized, will emerge as having particular significance in the Christian subsystem operating in the poem.

The major elements of the Christianity of the context of the poem which prove to be helpful in seeing that Christianity as a system itself

and one which operates significantly as a subsystem in The Dream include the following: The theology of the eighth-century English Church; ecclesiastical structure of the Church in England in the eighth century; the Christian life style and practices (including worship) of the eighth-century English Church.

Theological System

The theological system of the Anglo-Saxon Church is in no way distinct from that of orthodox early medieval theology. That theology was the result of a long process of definition, teaching, and debate. General councils were called to settle theological arguments when the debates posed a threat to the unity of the church or when a teaching regarded by the major body of the church as heresy was gaining strength in the church.

Only a minimum of detail need by given here as to the development of the theological system inherited by the Anglo-Saxons because it came to them more or less ready-made as the orthodox position which they desired to adhere to. There was some theological controversy, however, after the Anglo-Saxon Church was established, but the major involvement of the English Church was in confirming its support of the orthodox position--meaning by this time, the position of the Roman see. Such a confirmation took place at the Synod of Hatfield (680) which affirmed the English condemnation of the heresy of Eutyches.[2] The theological system itself is significant, however, because it is the basis for the Christianity which the Celtic Christians practiced and which Augustine brought to England, its teaching, its preaching, its worship.

The theological system is the abstract or philosophical system on which all other systems of the church are based and which gives them meaning.

Christology

Central in the Christian theological system is the nature of Christ and the significance of what he did. The most basic Christian belief is that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior. This statement of faith is the essence of the earliest confessions of faith used especially in relation to baptism.[3] But as soon as any detailed explanation was made concerning the meanings or implications of that basic statement, there arose disagreement.

The nature of Christ was the subject of intense theological debate in six General Councils of the Church from 325 to 680. The First General Council which met in Nicaea in 325 was called by Emperor Constantine to settle the Arian controversy. Arius taught that Christ "'was made of things that were not'" and that "'there was when He was not.'"[4] The Council affirmed that Christ is "'begotten, not made'" and that He is "'of one essence . . . with the Father'" (p. 108). The Second General Council at Constantinople in 381 condemned Apollinaris for the position that "Jesus had the body and animal soul of a man, but that the reasoning spirit in Him was the Logos" (p. 132). Emphasis in the thought of Apollinaris is on the divine which made the human one with it, but this position "really denied Christ's true humanity" (p. 132). The Council of Ephesus, the Third General Council, in 431 condemned Nestorius for the position that "'with the one name Christ we designate at the same time two natures'" and that "'the essential characteristics

in the nature of the divinity and in the humanity are from all eternity distinguished.'" He held that the two natures were in conjunction with each other, especially in will (pp. 133-134). Nestorius had been opposed by Cyril who held the position of one nature of Christ after the incarnation. Christ was God become man, "'from two natures, one.'" That one nature is the Logos united with humanity. This position diminishes the human nature of Christ (p. 134). Cyril had to compromise his position somewhat to sign a confession of faith which involved the continuing two natures of Christ, but he did not recant his previous position (p. 136).

The Council of Chalcedon of 451, the Fourth General Council, dealt with the question of the relationship between the two natures of Christ. Two years earlier, Eutyches had been declared heretical for holding the position that there was a union of the two natures of Christ. His position was associated with the concept of the confusion of the two natures (p. 133). The Council of Chalcedon formulated the Christology which has ever since that time been regarded as the orthodox position. It makes fine distinctions with regard to the two natures of Christ and their relationship. The main points of Chalcedonian Christology are the following: Christ is one person; He is in two natures; He is truly God; He is truly man; He is begotten of the Father according to Godhead, and of Mary according to manhood; He is not divided, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; The properties of the two natures are not mixed or confused though in Christ they are a union, in one person and one substance (p. 139).

The Council of Constantinople in 553, the Fifth General Council, declared that the Cyrillic interpretation of the Chalcedonian Christology

was the only orthodox one. This Cyrillic interpretation was in terms of Leontius' restatement of Cyril in Aristotelian terms, that is, that "the human in Christ is real, but its center or subject is the Logos" (pp. 142-143). Rome was displeased with this decision but temporarily accepted it. The Western (Roman) view was reinstated as orthodox by the Sixth General Council in 680 which also met at Constantinople. In this Council, it was declared that Christ had a human as well as a divine will, rather than the one will as held by the Monothelites. The significant factor is that Christ is held to be complete in his humanity as well as complete in his divinity (p. 147). This distinction is significant with regard to the Western concepts of salvation in which man could be fully redeemed only if Christ were fully man, and only full divinity would be capable of working such a redemption.

It should be noted that it is in connection with the Council of 680 that Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury called the Synod of Hatfield to affirm the orthodoxy of the English Church.[5]

Because Christ is the central fact of Christianity, what is held to be true of him is of central importance. The Christology which emerged as the result of the debates just mentioned makes very precise distinctions in defining the nature of Christ. The full humanity and the full divinity of Christ are so essential in the orthodox Western theological system that even slight shifts of emphasis toward the divine or toward the human lead to heretical positions.

Sinful Nature of Man and Redemption

Another major concept in the Christian system is the sinful nature of man. The belief that Christ died to bring man salvation makes the

assumption that man is sinful. But like the question of the nature of Christ, the question of the nature of man became the subject of serious controversy, but not of the magnitude of the Christological one. The "sin" controversy focused on a Celtic monk named Pelagius who moved to Rome near the year 400. He taught that men did not inherit original sin from Adam and that they have the power not to sin. He was opposed by Augustine of Hippo whose theology has as one of its major points the grace of God which alone can redeem man from his condition of original sin. Augustine's view of original sin and the sinfulness of man by the fact that he is a descendant of Adam is the orthodox position of the Church on that subject.

If Christ is the Son of God, truly God and truly man who died to redeem inherently sinful men, the question arises concerning how that redemption was accomplished. This is the element of soteriology in the Christian theological system. As Rosemary Woolf points out, two major interpretations of salvation were present in the medieval Church: the concept of Christ as victor over the power of the devil who held men captive, and Christ as a sacrificial offering for man--"the spotless for the guilty."[6] The idea of the defeat of the devil was held by Leo, Augustine, and Gregory the Great (p. 142). The sacrificial vein received fuller development by Anselm in the eleventh century, but it was expressed in the sixth century by Gregory the Great along with the conflict theory (p. 142).

Eschatology

And finally there is eschatology, the result for man of his being redeemed by Christ's death (either a conflict or sacrifice). It was

never the subject of debate in Christian history whether or not there is life beyond the grave. That there is and that for the one who has been redeemed it will be in heaven with the saints was a universal Christian teaching. It was a teaching of Christianity which was most appealing to the Anglo-Saxons who first heard about Christianity,[7] and it remained a major Christian teaching. It was to attain heaven that many an Anglo-Saxon became a Christian and that many an Anglo-Saxon Christian became a monk. There was much sin to be atoned for if one was to achieve heaven. Christ's sacrifice or victory made that attainment possible, but much responsibility fell on man to cleanse himself of sin if he was to become worthy of the kingdom of heaven.

Out of this theological system composed of the concepts of Christ --the Son of God, truly God and truly man, the savior of man by conquest or sacrifice, the sinful nature of man in need of redemption, and the promise of eternal life in heaven for those who became Christians and repented of their sins--grew the Church itself and the practices of the Church, its missionary spirit, its sacraments, its life, and its hope.

Ecclesiastical System

The ecclesiastical structure of the eighth-century English Church is the diocesan structure of the Roman Church as that structure developed in England where monastic ecclesiastical structure had asserted a strong influence, especially in the North. The first church in Britain was an extension of Gallican Christianity which came to Britain when it was under the rule of the Roman Empire.[8] The natives of Britain were Celts, and many of them became Christians while the Romans were on their island. The ecclesiastical structure was diocesan, patterned on

the Roman provincial government. Each major center was the seat of a bishop who exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the city and in theory over the surrounding area, but Christianity of this period in Britain was a phenomenon of city life; and, as Godfrey observes, the idea of a church in every village was far in the future.[9] But when Rome withdrew in the fifth century and the Anglo-Saxons gradually took over most of the island for themselves, Celtic Christianity became isolated from continental Christianity. The Celtic church survived in the areas where the Celtic people themselves took refuge and survived, particularly in Wales and Cornwall and Galloway. A Celtic missionary from Wales, Patrick, converted Ireland which became a vital center for the Celtic Church. The Celtic Church in Britain remained diocesan in structure. But in Ireland, although the church as established by Patrick was diocesan in structure, it took on a monastic structure after Patrick's death. This shift to a monastic structure was due to the tribal rather than civic social structure in Ireland. Under this new arrangement, there was a monastery established for each tribe as it was converted. The abbot of the monastery exercised the real authority even over the bishop, who was a member of the monastic community but functioned as the one who officially ordained priests and other bishops (pp. 54-55). This monastic structure was brought to Northumbria when Oswald asked for Christian leadership from Iona, an Irish Celtic Christian center. But that development comes later.

By the end of the sixth century, it was becoming obvious that neither the British nor the Gallican Church was interested in evangelizing the Anglo-Saxons who were firmly established in Britain. Pope Gregory the Great took the initiative to establish Christianity among

the Anglo-Saxons directly from Rome, and in 597 Augustine arrived in Kent to begin that mission.

Three factors made Kent a good place to begin the evangelizing of the Anglo-Saxons. Under King Ethelbert it was at that time the most powerful kingdom in England. Ethelbert's queen, Bertha, was a Christian from Gaul, and Ethelbert allowed her to have a chaplain and to practice her faith as she desired. And devotion to the pagan Germanic religion seemed particularly weak in Kent. It was a functioning cult with priests, ritual and superstition, but little deep conviction.[10]

Ethelbert was rather easily persuaded to become a Christian, and his kingdom followed him. He gave Augustine land and protection for the establishment of the church in Kent. That church was diocesan in structure as was the usual pattern of the Roman Church. A major territorial unit such as a nation or a large portion of a nation which contained several dioceses had an archbishop at the head of the bishops of the various dioceses. His city was called a metropolitan. The archbishop ranked directly below the Pope in ecclesiastical authority. Pope Gregory's plan, as recorded in Bede's History, was for Augustine to establish archbishoprics in London and York, each of which was to have twelve bishopries including the archbishopric.[11] In actuality, Augustine remained in Kent and functioned as the Archbishop of Canterbury where he could be close to the protection of Ethelbert. He did establish a bishopric in London and one in Rochester. But that was the extent of the spread of the mission under Augustine himself. Things did not progress as fast as Gregory had hoped; and though attempts were made, Augustine received no aid from the British church in Wales in his endeavor to convert the Anglo-Saxons (II-2, pp. 100-103).

The five archbishops who succeeded Augustine at Canterbury carried on what Augustine had begun and made considerable advances. During the time of Justus, the fourth Archbishop of Canterbury, Edwin, the king of Northumbria, was converted and a bishopric was established at York. But when Edwin was killed in battle, the bishop was forced to flee, leaving Deacon James in charge of the Christians there. When Christianity was reestablished in Northumbria under King Oswald, it was missionaries from the Irish Celtic church center of Iona where Oswald had earlier been in exile who were asked to come to bring Christianity to the people. The Christianity of these Irish Celts was a direct outgrowth of the Christianity which Patrick took to Ireland but which became monastic, as stated above. There was no ecclesiastical connection between the Celtic missionaries who came at Oswald's request to establish Christianity in Northumbria and the Christians associated with the Augustine Church with its center at Canterbury.

The Celtic Church (both Irish and British) was orthodox in its theology but distinct from the Roman Church in its practices. Those practices will be discussed more fully later; suffice it here to say that the monastic structure of Celtic Christianity, the date for the celebration of Easter which differed from Rome's date, and a distinct tonsure were the most obvious distinguishing marks of Celtic Christianity when it came to Northumbria. The spread of Christianity throughout northern and middle England (after the initial Augustine mission) was from that Northumbrian Celtic Church. Under that mission, bishoprics were established in Mercia (including jurisdiction over Middle Anglia and Lindsey) and reestablished in Essex, where the people had returned to paganism after their initial conversion under Augustine.

But in 663, just before the renewal of the energy of the Canterbury Church under Theodore, King Oswy of Northumbria thought it wise to settle the question of the differences between the Celtic Church and the Roman one established at Canterbury. Oswy's concern indicates a continuing strong influence of the Roman Church in Northumbria even though the Celtic Church had been strong there for thirty years. The meeting called by Oswy to settle the controversy which focused on the date of the celebration of Easter and the style of the tonsure was the famous Council of Whitby. After hearing from both the Roman and the Celtic Christians, Oswy decided in favor of Rome. The reason he gave was that Rome was Peter's see and it is Peter who holds the keys to the gate of Heaven. Oswy did not want to be in Peter's disfavor when he arrived at that gate and asked for entry.[12]

The leader of the Celtic Church--Coleman, bishop and abbot of Lindisfarne--left England, but most of the Celtic clergy remained and accepted Roman practice insofar as it was prescribed. But in areas where personal preference was the determining factor, the Celtic Christians for a long time maintained an identity centering around preference for seclusion, simplicity, and spontaneity as opposed to Rome's more formal and gregarious practices.

When Theodore of Tarsus became Archbishop of Canterbury in 669, that post had been vacant for five years, and the church in England was in general disrepair largely due to the plague which had killed many clergy including Deusdedit, the preceding Archbishop of Canterbury, and Wighard, who had gone to Rome to be consecrated for that post. But the scene was set for a general revitalization of the Church as a unity throughout England. It is significant in this regard that, according to

Bede's History, King Oswy of Northumbria and King Egbert of Kent had acted jointly in sending Wighard to Rome to be consecrated "Archbishop of the Church of the English" (IV-1, p. 203). Theodore was accompanied to Canterbury by Hadrian, who had been the Pope's first choice for that archbishopric. Hadrian's instructions from the Pope were "to give full support to Theodore in his teaching, and to ensure that he did not introduce into the Church which he was to rule any Greek customs which conflicted with the teachings of the true Faith" (IV-1, p. 204).

By the end of Theodore's archbishopric in 690, there were twelve bishoprics in England, all officially Roman and all under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Theodore introduced into the English Church synodical government as an administrative device. In 672 he called the first synod which met at Hertford. This meeting was the first gathering in one place of all the English bishops and in a sense is the beginning of a functionally unified Church of England.[13] Otherwise its significance was primarily formal with most of its business being the reaffirmation of previous actions by councils of the Catholic Church.

This synod confirmed the observance of the Roman Easter and officially ended the practice of many bishops, monks and priests to wander about. Godfrey says that "this actually was quite an important measure, as marking the end of the migratory stage in the Conversion, and the inauguration of an established diocesan system."[14] This "wandering about" was much more characteristic of Celtic than Roman Christians, as will be developed later in this chapter. Of special interest is the Synod of Hatfield, referred to earlier, called by Theodore

in 680 to confirm the orthodox position of the English Church against the heresy of Eutyches.

The number of bishoprics continued to grow as the church grew in numbers and influence. Bede lists seventeen bishoprics as those in existence when he is writing his Ecclesiastical History in 731.

In 735 York was made an archbishopric. It was "inferior in prestige to Canterbury but a potentially dangerous rival nevertheless."[15] And when Mercia came to supremacy among the kingdoms of England, Offa, its king, wished to have a separate church for his own realm. As a result, Lichfield in 788 became an archbishopric but maintained its metropolitan standing only until 803, seven years after Offa's death.[16]

By this time the Danes were already raiding parts of England, and by about 850 the Danish raids were transformed into earnest conquest campaigns. By 870 only Wessex remained of the Anglo-Saxons kingdoms, and that only because of Alfred's bravery and his ability to negotiate terms with Guthrum, the Danish leader. York survived as an archbishopric, but it was weakened by the Danish invasion. The Danes now had a firm hold on most of England, and the future of Christianity in England was questionable. But Guthrum became a Christian and supported the rebuilding of the Church in his English realm. In Wessex, King Alfred attempted to restore the Church, which was in shambles. His attempt to revive monasticism was generally a failure because of the lack of men and women who desired a monastic life.

When King Alfred of Wessex reclaimed much of England from the Danes, he began his efforts to reestablish monasticism and learning in the English Church, but this goes beyond the period of concern for the composition of The Dream of the Rood.

Within this large system of archbishops and bishops and general synods involving all of England operated the individual religious systems of a region or tribe. The minster was the religious enclosure which was built on the land granted to the church and which served as the focal point of regional church life. Each minster, according to Deanesly, "had a church served by Benedictine monks, by monastic clerics in the Irish tradition, or by priests and clerics in minor orders living together . . . ."[17] In the Celtic north the clergy were monks exclusively (p. 196). In the early periods of conversion, the minster was established by royal endowment "to serve the king and his court, or his relations, and to provide a church and home for the missionary who converted the king" (p. 196). As time went on, minsters were established for other purposes: "for royal princesses . . . , for the king's mass priest, or for the service of the subkings and ealdormen" (p. 196).

But the close tie between lord and church life had its weak aspect. At times the lords made appointments to religious posts on the basis of non-religious considerations. Some lords even acted as the abbots of monasteries on their land, but lived a married life at home with wife and children. Also, land so granted to the Church was sometimes reclaimed by a lord if material pressures such as war became great. Such was particularly true in the Danish invasion in the ninth century.

The nature and function of the minsters varied greatly. For example, a strictly Benedictine minster would participate in evangelism only by building chapels or oratories in areas where people did not have easy access to a minster and this station might be "served by a clerk or priest from the abbey . . ."[18] whereas other minsters might have as

their major function the pastoral care of a particular area as when a minster was the see of a bishop.

The attitude of loyalty which is expressed by any member of the clergy for the one who has ecclesiastical jurisdiction over him is an important part of the functioning of the Christian system in Anglo-Saxon times. And this concept is reinforced by the Germanic ideal of loyalty which the Anglo-Saxons brought to Britain with them. Godfrey observes: "The loyalty of man for lord is the key to much that might otherwise seem surprising in the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church" (p. 62). This concept is true of the attitude of bishops to the Pope but even more specifically of the attitude of clergy to bishop.

Religious Practice and Worship

An interrelationship of two subsystems within early Christian England which must be examined for clarification of religious practice in Anglo-Saxon England is that which took place between the Celtic and the Roman subsystems, particularly in Northumbria. The historical frame of reference for this interaction was described above in connection with the development of the ecclesiastical element of early English Christianity. Here the discussion will focus on the distinctions which characterized the Celtic and Roman Christians which make it possible to identify them clearly as definable, distinguishable components in the larger Christian system.

First of all, it should be noted that ultimately both traditions did operate as a part of the same Christian system at the theoretical or theological level. The Celtic Church had remained orthodox in its

theology which had its early development in continental Christianity the same as the Roman theology. It was the same theology.

The other major point which indicates that the Celtic and Roman Churches were ultimately a part of the same Christian system is the fact that both were apostolic, both having as the central factor of official or ceremonial life bishops who were ecclesiastical descendents of the apostles of Christ. The bishops had the only power to ordain priests. In the Celtic Church, however, the bishop's role was ceremonial and perfunctory, as will be developed below. Pope Gregory the Great seems to have assumed the legitimacy of the British bishops when he gave Augustine authority over them.[19] It was not until the time of Archbishop Theodore that Celtic consecration of bishops and ordination of priests were seriously questioned. Theodore insisted upon Roman consecration and ordination.[20]

The differences which developed between the Celtic and Roman Christians were due to the isolated circumstances in which Celtic Christianity existed for some two hundred years after the Anglo-Saxon invasion. The Celtic Church was not hostile or opposed to the development in the continental church, which more and more looked to Rome for leadership; it was simply cut off from it by historical circumstances. And in response to the immediate circumstances in which the Celtic Church existed, it developed practices which were distinct from what developed on the continent.

The date of Easter and the shape of the tonsure, which were different in Celtic Christianity, became the specific issues which caused conflict between the two churches, but they were not at the core of the distinction between Roman and Celtic Christianity. That central

element of difference is the nature of the monastic practices of the two churches and the relationship between those practices and the ecclesiastical structure of each church.

Monasticism was important in the life of both the Celtic and the Roman Church. In the Roman Church the monasticism was that based on Benedict's Rule as modified to meet specific circumstances. One of the characteristic features of Benedictinism is order, based on prescription and stability.[21] As Knowles points out, Benedict's Rule prescribes a daily routine whereby the monks working together as a community provide for their own basic needs and spend many hours in the celebration of the Divine Office (p. 5). Life in the monasteries had no more connection with life outside it than was absolutely necessary, and no work within the monastery "is directed to an end outside its walls" (p. 4). When a man became a monk in a particular monastery, the usual pattern was that he would live the rest of his life there (p. 7).

By contrast, the monks in Celtic tradition followed a more loosely-structured life. Monks usually lived in individual cells[22] rather than in a common building and were more spontaneous in their prayers.[23] They were also adventurous and traveled a great deal from one monastery to another, often covering great distances on foot even if it was possible to ride a horse.[24]

The general practice in Benedictine monasticism was for life to be as simple as possible with little emphasis on the physical but at the same time no austere asceticism. By contrast, the Celtic monks had a propensity for extreme solitude and at times for severe asceticism.[25] The Celtic preference for solitude is seen in Aidan's choice of a solitary island for his monastery, Lindisfarne,[26] and in Cuthbert's attempts to

withdraw into a life not only of solitude but also of austerity. In this regard it is significant that, in the words of Godfrey, the "penitential code was a Celtic invention, to be transmitted to England and the Continent from the seventh century onwards" (p. 56). Also, both public and private confession were a part of Celtic Church life before they became a general practice in the Roman Church (p. 55).

The love of learning and scholarship which later came to be associated with Benedictine monasticism was not originally part of the Benedictine Rule except in the time allotted to reading.[27] However, the greatest achievement in learning in England during the Anglo-Saxon period (the work of Bede) was the product of the scholarship which came to be associated with Benedictine monasticism.

In Celtic monasticism, scholarship had an older tradition and seems to have been part of the original conception of monastic life or extremely early in development. For a time before the development of classical learning in Benedictine monasteries, Western learning was kept alive in Celtic monasteries.[28]

Though the cross was important in both Roman (Benedictine) and Celtic monasticism, it seems to have had special significance for the Celtic. The many standing crosses from Celtic times "are evidence of the reverence paid during this early period to the symbol of our redemption."[29]

One of the most important distinctions between Celtic and Roman monasticism is that in the Celtic Church as it developed in Ireland the monastery was, in Godfrey's words, "the central ecclesiastical unit" (p. 53). The monastery was the center of Christian life in a given area, and all the clergy were monastic, under control of the abbot. Holy

orders, however, "were always conferred by a bishop, though the abbot might join in the act by laying his hand on the candidate's head" (p. 55). The bishop was a member of the monastic community (p. 54).

The clergy of the Roman Church were not clearly distinct from the monastics, but monasticism was not the ecclesiastical unit. The bishop, rather, had authority over the clergy of his bishopric, but no control over the monasteries.[30] The bishop was not a member of a monastic community, though he and his familia might adhere rather closely to the flexible Benedictine Rule. Anglo-Saxon clergy often went to the monasteries for training, but it was as secular clergy rather than as wandering monks that they served under the bishop of a diocese. The general term minster which indicated a hedged-in enclosure for religious use might be applied to a monastery, the quarters of a bishop and his familia or any other religious entity which had been granted land for religious use.

Italian type monastic life was first brought to England by Augustine and his men who had been monks on the Coelian, Gregory's monastery.[31] This monasticism, according to Knowles, was "probably something between that of the Rule and that of the basilical monasteries of the City" (p. 21). It is not known whether or not Benedict's Rule was followed in the monastery of S. S. Peter and Paul established by Augustine. Rule monasticism probably came to England with Wilfred's introduction of it at Ripon and Hexham in Northumbria in 650 and by Benedict Biscop first at S. S. Peter and Paul, then at Wearmouth (674) and Jarrow (685) (pp. 21-22).

The first half of the eighth century, especially in the north, was the time and setting for the highest point in the development and influ-

ence of Anglo-Saxon monasticism.[32] By 870 monastic life had first decayed and had then been "ultimately extinguished north of the Humber by the great Danish invasion of 867-870" (p. 24). In Mercia and Wessex too, regular monastic life disappeared. "In other words," says Knowles, "Anglo-Saxon monasticism, whether considered as an institution or as a body of tradition with a local habitation, had ceased to live [in England] by the time of Alfred" (p. 24).

The liturgies of the Celtic monasteries and the Roman monasteries and churches were also different. The Celtic liturgy was Gallican from the days of contact between the Celtic and Continental Church. The liturgy of the Roman Church was Gelasian and Gregorian with some Gallican elements.[33]

The Gallican liturgy of the Celtic Church is, again, the result of the development of Celtic Christianity in isolation from the Continent. This development is observable in the liturgy because the isolation came at a time "when important liturgical and disciplinary changes were being made by the papacy."[34]

The development of liturgical practices in England involves the development of three sacramentaries which are the nucleus of Roman liturgical worship. Deanesly defines a sacramentary as " a collection of masses for the great feasts and some of the Sundays of the year; forms for the administration of other sacraments, and a variety of blessings" (p. 156). By the time of the conversion of England, there were three Roman sacramentaries: the Leonine, the Gelasian, and the Gregorian.

The Leonine sacramentary, traditionally attributed to Leo I (Pope from 440-461) "was a large collection of masses, certainly drawn

up for the use of the Church of Rome locally, containing the stational masses said by the pope throughout the year. These are not arranged strictly in order."[35] This collection includes, according to Deanesly,

> 45 masses composed by pope Vigilius during the siege of Rome by the Goth, Witigis, in 537 . . . . The masses of Vigilius . . . all refer to the dangers and hardships of the siege, and were inserted in the Leonine book on the anniversary of his consecration. The content of the Leonine book was not regarded as fixed (p. 157).

The Gelasian sacramentary

> was a presbyteral book, for use in the Roman churches of title. It now seems certain that the origin of the Gelasianum was Roman . . . . The Gelasianum was not a sacramentary for papal use, but for the priests of the Roman titles.[36]

Deanesly points out that "the early Gregorian sacramentary was a papal mass book for the stational churches, with masses for the Sundays and ferias when the pope went to one or other to celebrate."[37] This Gregorian sacramentary did not have the large "variety of blessings, occasional offices and votive masses for use on 'vacant' Sundays or times of special emergency" which were contained in the Gelasian book (p. 158). Deanesly believes that Augustine would surely have brought both the Gelasian and the early Gregorian books to England when he came in 597 (p. 158). The early Gregorian sacramentary originally "contained only the liturgical prayers of those days on which the Pope officiated in churches other than St. Peter's"[38] and was later "supplemented with borrowings from the Gelasian sacramentary" (p. 90).

These two liturgical books have an interesting relationship to each other and to "the oldest examples of the Gallican missal (the Bobbiense and the Gothicum)."[39] According to the work of Chavasse which Deanesly relies upon, neither the Roman nor the Gallican book is

"directly descended from the other" nor do both have "a common ancestor in the Leonine" (p. 159). Deanesly seems to favor the following conjecture as to the relationship of the books in question. "It is now held by some scholars," says Deanesly, that

> there must have been an intermediate book between the Leonine, and the two later books, Gelasian and Gregorian; itself sharply distinct from the Leonine book. From this intermediate source, now perished, were derived, on the one hand the pre-Gelasian and Gelasian books, and on the other, the pre-Gregorian and Gregorian. Each of the two groups had a double development, the one 'Roman', the other 'Gallican' (p. 159).

But as to the development of these rites in England between the time of Augustine and the Viking raids there is no manuscript evidence (p. 159).

It seems safe to conjecture, however, that the Christianity which developed from the mission directly from Rome and which maintained strong ties with Rome would have used an essentially Roman liturgy. Deanesly comments:

> The liturgy of the Anglo-Saxon church from Augustine's time to the Norman Conquest may be said to have been Roman with minor Gallican embellishments. No missal of the period before the Danish raids has come down to us; but it is hardly likely that Augustine would, for the canon of the mass, have used other than the traditional form he had used in Rome; for the other parts of the eucharist he would have used the sacramentary he had brought with him, or the masses and blessings of the Gallican rite (p. 156).

At the time of Augustine's mission, "no Roman sacramentary had as yet been officially prescribed . . ." (p. 156). Some degree of spontaneity was operative, and "it appears that new masses were written into old books as occasion demanded; nor did the use of one sacramentary preclude the use of another as desired" (p. 156). By the time of Aldhelm--(d. 709)--"the new Gregorian arrangement of the Sunday masses according to 'the circle of the year', had reached England" (p. 159).

The Gallican rite had been used in England by the Celtic Church and Gregory's advice to Augustine, who had heard the Gallican mass in Gaul, was to make for the English Church a distinct liturgy based on the best of what could be gathered from all known sources,[40] but the Roman mass prevailed in England. In 747 the Council of Cloveshoe "accepted as the right standard that which had been received from the Church of Rome."[41]

The chief function of the liturgy is to bring divine life to man in his present existence[42] and the mass is, as Parsch observes, the focal point of all phases of the liturgy (I, p. 6). In the Christianity which Augustine took to England, the mass was the major point of contact between the Church and the lay Christians, the center of Christian life. The lay Christians would come to the minsters on Sunday to participate in the mystery of the mass in which the body and blood of Christ, through whom man receives grace, are present on the altar in the form of bread and wine and are partaken of by those participating in the worship. The focal point of every mass is this sacrament of the Eucharist. Gregory, in his letter to Augustine, refers to receiving "the Body of Almighty God himself" as an "inestimable mystery."[43] Throughout the year there are events of special Christian significance which are commemorated in the mass. The major ones are Advent, Easter, and Pentecost, around which an entire season of special commemorated events occur. The special prayers and events associated with these seasons were among the early features of the liturgy to be developed. The movement through the year from one of these seasons to the next with other less central events in between make up the Christian liturgical year.

One part of the Good Friday liturgy and the two feasts of the cross have special significance in relation to the cross and are therefore of particular concern in this study: (1) The Adoration (veneration) of the Cross which takes place on Good Friday; (2) The Invention of the Cross which takes place on May 3 to commemorate the finding of the cross by St. Helena; (3) The Exaltation of the Cross on September 14 to celebrate the recovery of the cross from the Persians by Emperor Heraclius in 628. These celebrations of the cross were a part of the liturgy used by Anglo-Saxon Christians.

The Adoration of the Cross which became a permanent part of the Good Friday liturgy was known to the Anglo-Saxons as "creeping to the cross" because in this ceremony the people would crawl to the cross on their hands and knees.[44] Farina says that "the custom appears well established as early as English liturgical documents go" and points out that "it is prescribed in the Pontifical of Egbert (732-766)" (p. 11).

Other features of the Adoration with special significance for this study include reference to "the wood of the Cross, upon which hung the salvation of the world!" To these words the people respond, "Come, let us adore!" The ceremony ends with the words, "Your Cross, Lord, we adore! We praise and acclaim Your holy resurrection. Behold, through the wood of the Cross joy has come into the whole world."[45]

The Invention of the Cross, which is a celebration of the finding of the cross by St. Helena, emphasizes the following aspects of the cross: that it was discovered by a follower of Christ after it had been buried for some time, almost three centuries; that the cross had healing power; that by decree of Constantine, who had seen a vision of the cross, the cross would no longer be an instrument of punishment, a

sign of shame and ignominy, but an "object of veneration and praise"; the wood of the cross "sanctified by the touch of Christ's sacred limbs and precious blood" (III, p. 266).

The Exaltation of the Cross stressed that men "may 'glory in the Cross of Jesus Christ'" because "in the Cross is 'salvation, life, and resurrection'" as it was through Christ's "obedience unto death on the Cross." As Christ was exalted, "so also it is only through humility, subjection, and suffering that we merit our exaltation." There is praise of "the 'sweet wood which alone was worthy to carry heaven's King!'" Attention is called to "the great twofold effect of His death, triumph over the devil and the gathering of all the redeemed about His Cross." There is a contrast between the tree of paradise and Calvary's tree: "on the one the devil conquered, on the other he was conquered!" (V, p. 191)

Concluding Statement of the Christian Subsystem

Cross, Christ, and dreamer and the circumstances related to each are the major components of the Christian subsystem in The Dream of the Rood. The elements of the Christian theological system described above are all fully operative in the relationships and conditions of the cross, Christ, and the dreamer. The Celtic monastic Christianity as distinct from the more highly ordered Roman diocesan system and Benedictine monasticism is also significant.

Christ

Christ, the central figure of Christianity, is related in the words of the cross in the poem to sinful man, the dreamer. Christ is called God Almighty, indicating explicitly that the poet is depicting the Christ

of the poem as truly God (Chalcedonian theology)--not just a symbol or some sort of manifestation of God: bæt wæs god ælmihtig (l. 39). But there is also no question in the poem that Christ is also truly man. The poem mentions several times that Christ suffered on the cross (ll. 52, 84, 145-146) and that the cross was wet with the blood from Christ's side (l. 49).

Rosemary Woolf says that the poet of The Dream was a skilled theologian demonstrating great insight and care in the statements and implications he made concerning the nature of Christ. She develops the thesis that Christ is truly God in the poem and truly man but that the features of the crucifixion which relate to Christ as man, the agony, the wounding, the suffering and especially death are transferred by the poet to the cross, thus allowing the poet to be orthodox in his theology and at the same time avoid the mind-staggering possibility that God died on the cross and also avoid the heretical positions which make Christ somehow either not truly God or truly man--the Apollinarian heresy, for example, which held "that in Christ the place of the rational soul was taken by the Divinity" (p. 148). By such a view as the Apollinarian, the crucifixion would be the death of the human body but not the divine rational soul. The other alternative would be that God died on the cross --a mind-boggling concept which the poet skillfully avoided (p. 148). Woolf says that the author of the poem "does not speak of Christ's death: the climax of the poem is simply, Crist wæs on rode, and His death is thereafter described as a sleep, in terms which the cathartic effect suggest exhaustion, release and temporary rest" (p. 148).

Farina, on the other hand, denies that there is any indication in the poem that the poet was "concerned with the doctrinal controversies

of his times" (p. 23). According to Farina, "the poem is doctrinal only insofar as it is orthodox" (p. 23).

John V. Fleming, in opposition to Woolf, demonstrates that the poem clearly deals with the death of Christ. Fleming observes that the same line which Woolf considers the climax--Crist waes on rode, also says that he died--cwiddon cyniges fyll "where fyll means 'death,' or something stronger, like 'slaughter.'"[46]

Cross

The cross is of course centrally important in The Dream of the Rood. Whether or not there are intricate theological reasons for transferring aspects of Christ's nature to the cross, the identification of the significance of Christ with the significance of the cross is an element of the Christian system which produced the poem and is an important factor in the poem. Since the essential significance of Christ is that he is the redeemer of sinful man, and the cross was the immediate instrument of that redemption, there is a close relationship (almost identification) between the meaning of Christ and the meaning of the cross.

In the poem the dreamer prays to the cross (l. 122), his protection is the cross (ll. 130-131), the cross will take him to heaven (ll. 135-139). All of these factors in relation to the cross are synonymous with what the Christian would feel about Christ himself.

The cross, because of its close identity with Christ, and because it is the instrument of Christ's suffering and sacrifice, becomes for the monastic Christian the perfect symbol of self-denial and the bloodless martyrdom of the ascetic life as suggested by Fleming (p. 57). It

is not surprising in this light to observe a greater devotion to the cross among the Celtic monks and clergy, all of whom were monastic and tended to be much more eremetic and austere in their asceticism than the Roman Christians whose clergy were not really monastic and whose monks were not eremetic and not austerely ascetic. This concept will be observed again with regard to the condition of the dreamer in The Dream of the Rood.

Other qualities of the cross are its healing power (ll. 85-86) and its position of honor over other wood as Mary holds a position of honor over other women (ll. 90-94).

Man's Sin

Man's need for redemption, man's sinful nature, is a presupposition of the significance of Christ as redeemer. Man's sinful nature is a component of the Christian subsystem in the poem. The dreamer is deeply conscious of his sin (ll. 13-14). Christ died for mankind's many sins (l. 99). And the doctrine of original sin, the inherited sinful nature of man as a descendent of Adam is also explicitly part of the poem in the reference to Adam's deed of old (l. 100). Intense awareness of sin is inherent in extreme asceticism, which is an attempt of man to be cleansed of that sin and thus be able to enter the joy of heaven.

Redemption

Redemption, the point at which the meaning of Christ and the cross merge, is also the point at which the significance of Christ and the cross touch man (the dreamer). This convergence of meaning in the concept of redemption indicates the importance of the concept of redemp-

tion in the Christian system and in the Christian subsystem in the poem. Christ's act on the cross frees (redeems) man (ll. 41 and 147).

The two major emphases in soteriology are present in The Dream and function as important elements in the Christian subsystem. They are the emphasis on Christ as victor over the devil and Christ as sacrifice for man. Rosemary Woolf develops this double emphasis in the crucifixion. She says:

> The Dream of the Rood then was written at a time when both Christology and soteriology laid this double stress on the Crucifixion as a scene of both triumph and suffering, and the author has succeeded in fulfilling what might seem to be an artistically impossible demand. Without such a brilliant conception as that of the poet's, the two aspects would inevitably have become separated, as they were usually in the Middle Ages (p. 143).

Eschatology

Eschatology functions in The Dream as it does in the Christian theological systems generally. The dreamer is able to look forward to the joy of heaven because of Christ's victory on the cross.

In The Dream, life and heaven are directly related to the concept of redemption. Lines 147-148 say that Christ freed (redeemed) us and gave us life, a heavenly home. Here, life and heavenly home are by the grammatical structure of the sentence seen to be synonymous. This concept is supported by the ascetic attitude that this life is death, and death is the way to true life.[47]

Asceticism

The "present" circumstances of the dreamer in the poem are of great significance. He is alone (ll. 123-124). This condition has signi-

ficance with regard to the monastic life practiced by many Anglo-Saxon Christians, especially those in the north under the influence of Celtic monasticism. Fleming states, "The Dreamer is a monastic, a spiritual exile and a solitary" (p. 62). Fleming develops the monasticism implicit and explicit in the poem to the extent that he can call The Dream "a poem about the monastic life . . ." (p. 71). Fleming points to the following aspects as suggesting the monastic character of the poem: (1) the lordless man, (2) movement from exile to community, (3) the homeland for which the monk strives, (4) the idea of Christ as warrior, (5) cross as spiritual crucifixion, (6) cross as daily martyrdom, (7) concept of bloodless or ascetic martyrdom, (8) penitential submission, (9) solitariness, (10) accidia-langunghwila (anxiety as to whether sacrifices are worth it), (11) penitential "going to the cross," (12) cross for redemption, not as a relic, (13) no fear of last judgment for the faithful, (14) ascension and eschatological theme, and (15) midnight as the time of the Lord's coming (pp. 46-70).

Fleming's article is extremely helpful in giving an understanding of the monastic aspect of the poem through the dreamer. But he seems to make the assumption that Benedictine monasticism is in full control. However, it should be noted that the ascetic characteristics in the poem suggest strongly the flavor of Celtic monasticism in contrast to the simple, well-ordered Roman-Benedictine type. It seems contradictory to Benedictine monasticism, which is a collective simple life that the dreamer in the poem expresses no quality of companionship or any kind of relationship to others in his present life, except that the cross tells him to relate to men in words the truth about the cross. Such a circumstance is much more suggestive of the Celtic monastic tradition of

wandering monks than the stable, communal Benedictine monks. To be sure, such wandering monasticism was officially banned in England by the Synod of Hertford called by Theodore in 673.[48] But it is also true that many qualities of Celtic Christianity persisted even after Roman ways were the only officially permissible ones. Perhaps that very circumstance is partially responsible for the apparent isolated condition of the dreamer. The dreamer's reference to powerful friends who are no longer present but who have gone to heaven might well be a reference to the waning in England of Celtic monasticism which had once given the dreamer a satisfaction now removed from him.

Such a reading is not necessary, but it is consistent with the tone and content of the rest of the poem and at least suggests the functioning of a Celtic or Celtic-like element in the poem.

Other specific details which have significance in the Christian subsystem of the poem are the concept of a heaven as the abode of the saints (ll. 132-134), a place of burning (l. 149) as the abode of the unredeemed, and the earth as a middangeard (l. 104), middle earth, between heaven and hell. There are also angels present who are a special creation of God (ll. 9-10).

But the Christian subsystem in The Dream consists most extensively of Christ, the cross, man, and the concepts of sin, redemption, and heaven.

NOTES

[1]William O. Stevens, The Cross in the Life and Literature of the Anglo-Saxons, Yale Studies in English, ed. Albert S. Cook (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1904), pp. 7-8.

[2]Bede, A History of the English Church and People, Tr. Leo Sherley-Price, rev. by R. E. Latham (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1970), IV-17, pp. 234-236.

[3]Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church, rev. by Cyril C. Richardson, Wilhelm Pauck and Robert T. Handy (1918; rpt. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), pp. 58-59.

[4]Ibid., p. 108. Page numbers in parentheses in the Christology discussion are references to Walker.

[5]Bede, IV-17, pp. 234-236.

[6]Rosemary Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences on The Dream of the Rood," Medium Aevum, 27 (1958), 142.

[7]Bede, II-13, p. 127.

[8]Margaret Deanesly, The Pre-Conquest Church in England (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1961), p. 12.

[9]John Godfrey, The Church in Anglo-Saxon England (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1962), pp. 15-16.

[10]Ibid., pp. 65-66.

[11]Bede, I-29, pp. 84-86.

[12]Ibid., III-25, p. 192.

[13]Godfrey, pp. 131-133.

[14]Ibid., p. 132.

[15]C. Warren Hollister, The Making of England (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1966), p. 48.

[16]John R. H. Moorman, A History of the Church in England (1953; rpt. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1961), p. 39.

[17]Deanesly, p. 196.

[18]Ibid., p. 197.

[19]Bede, I-27, p. 76.

[20]Godfrey, p. 55.

[21]Dom David Knowles, The Monastic Order in England, 2nd ed. (1940; rpt. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1963), p. 7.

[22]A. H. Thompson, "Northumbrian Monasticism" in Bede, His Life, Times and Writings, ed. A. H. Thompson (1932; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1966), p. 67.

[23]Godfrey, p. 55.

[24]Godfrey, p. 45 and Bede, IV-3, pp. 207-208.

[25]Deanesly, p. 115.

[26]Godfrey, p. 104.

[27]Knowles, pp. 5-6.

[28]Godfrey, p. 46.

[29]Ibid., p. 56.

[30]Thompson, p. 83.

[31]Knowles, pp. 19-20.

[32]Ibid., p. 23.

[33]Deanesly, p. 157.

[34]Godfrey, p. 57.

[35]Deanesly, p. 156.

[36]Ibid., p. 157.

[37]Ibid., p. 158.

[38]Dom Peter Farina, "The Liturgical Background to The Dream of the Rood" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, St. John's, 1965), p. 89.

[39]Deanesly, p. 159.

[40]Bede, I-27, p. 73.

[41]Godfrey, p. 83.

[42]Pius Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, 5 vols., 2nd ed. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1953), Vol. I, p. 5.

[43]Bede, I-27, p. 81.

[44]Farina, p. 11.

[45]Parsch, II, pp. 334-335.

[46]John V. Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," Traditio, 22 (1966), 52.

[47]Bede, IV-29, pp. 263-264.

[48]Ibid., IV-5, p. 215.

CHAPTER V

THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF CHRISTIAN AND GERMANIC SUBSYSTEMS IN THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

Now that the Germanic and Christian subsystems of The Dream of the Rood have been described, it is the purpose of this final chapter to demonstrate explicitly the nature of the interrelationships between those two subsystems in the artistic unity of the poem.

It should be recalled that a systems approach is concerned primarily with the interrelationships of components within an entity with reference to environment. The components of a system are defined in relationship to each other rather than in analytic isolation. Carrying out such a study necessitates beginning by explaining one element of the system and keeping that phase of the system clearly functioning as first one and then another aspect is brought into operation. The final goal of such a study is the perception of the entity under consideration as dynamic in nature being composed of simultaneously interacting elements.

The process of conducting such a study is like the circus act in which the performer spins plates on a series of limber poles. First one plate is set to spinning, then the second. But before the third can be set into motion, one and two must be spun again to keep them going. The process involves some repetition in the respinning of the first

plates so that all plates will be spinning when the goal of the act is achieved.

If the systems approach seems a bit repetitious at times, that is due to the fact that systems study is not merely analytical and linear in approach. It is dynamic and cumulative. Once an element is defined into play, it must be kept in mind as an active component and serve as part of the definition of other elements.

In this study up to this point, the major concern has been to define as dynamically as possible two major subsystems of The Dream. That in itself involved bringing into play many elements which in themselves operate as systems, for example the Germanic comitatus or the Christian theology of eighth-century England. All those "plates" must now be spinning securely if the dynamic interaction between the Christian and Germanic subsystems in The Dream are to be fully perceived. This part of the study will necessitate some "respinning" in the process of showing the major interrelationships in question.

The Germanic subsystem of The Dream includes linguistic and poetic elements, but of more immediate importance are the following: comitatus structure; Christ as warrior, chief, and king; the cross as loyal retainer; the cross as practical treasure; dreamer as exile; dreamer as potential scop; Adam's old deed as the memory of an old deed requiring vengeance in the old Germanic social system; and the joys of heaven as the after-battle celebration of the comitatus in the mead-hall (from which the dreamer is presently excluded).

The major components of the Christian subsystem are the following: man's life on earth between heaven above and hell beneath; man's guilt of sin--his own and Adam's; the suffering of God Almighty on the

cross to free (redeem) man; the proper way of life and the way to heaven as shown to man by the cross; the concept that Christ tasted death, arose, returned to heaven but will come again; Doomsday; Christ as judge; heaven as the reward for those who bear the cross; the suggestion of the ascetic life in the solitary condition of the dreamer.

There are enough major Germanic elements in The Dream for a pagan Anglo-Saxon who is perhaps only nominally Christian but whose thoughts and ethical patterns are still very Germanic to hear the poem as a heroic conquest with the trappings of comitatus life. The fact that Christ is the hero might be important to him, but it is just as likely that the important thing to him is that Christ is the hero.

On the other hand, there are enough basic Christian elements in the poem for a devout Christian to hear the poem with the emphasis squarely on Christ as redeemer who suffered on the cross to give man life and heaven.

This potential for a double reading is not the same thing as symbolism or allegory in which a "story" means one thing at one level and something else at another. Christ is not a symbol of a warrior, and there is no warrior by some other name who is a symbol for Christ. Here Christ is what he is seen to be in Christian theology, Almighty God suffering on the cross. He is at the same time just as fully a Germanic warrior presented in terms of the Germanic subsystem which has the potential for being the focal point of interest as much as does Christ as a figure of Christian theological significance.

Since the poem can be heard either way, or even more significantly both ways simultaneously, as in the case of the warrior who is also a Christian or a monastic or episcopal Christian familiar with war, or

the heroic tradition, or a modern reader aware of both subsystems, the poem is doubly rich in its capacity to evoke images and build responses.

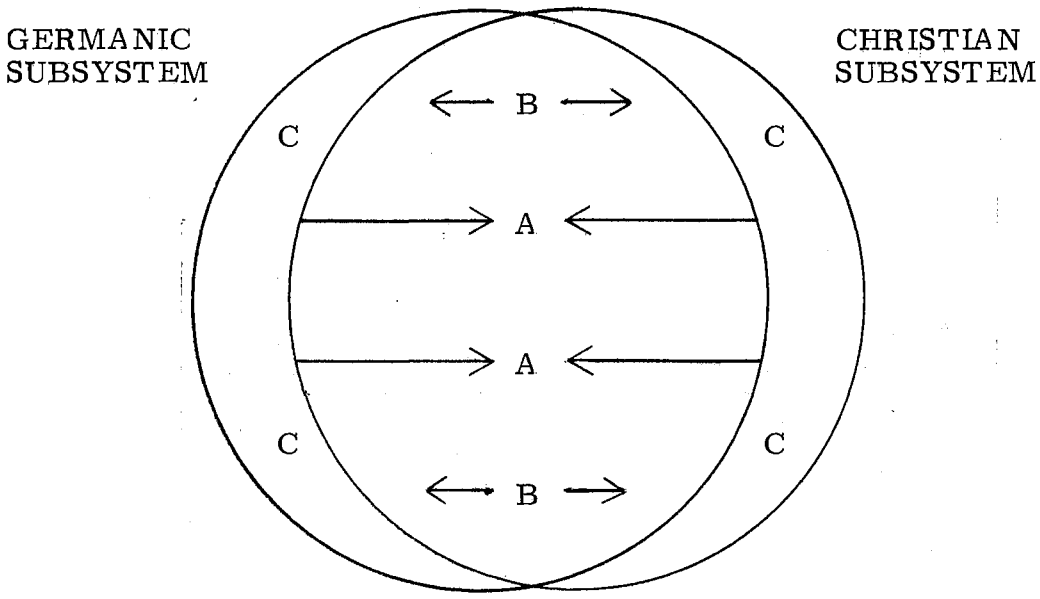
But the poem is even more complex than the above explanation might suggest. The poem does not consist merely of two parallel levels of meaning extending throughout the poem in two straight lines of interpretation. Such a circumstance is what occurs in allegory. The increased complexity in The Dream occurs when in heroic terms a given event has a particular significance but in Christian terms it has another meaning and the two potential meanings are opposite rather than parallel. For example, to think of Christ as a Germanic warrior charging toward the cross, stripping himself and aggressively mounting the cross in conquest is in itself jolting in relation to the biblical account of the crucifixion. And exile, which is abhorrent in Germanic thought and life, is a positive virtue in Christian asceticism. Both concepts of exile are significant in the poem, as are those of Christ as warrior and Christ as Son of God and redeemer. Such occurrences set up a tension in the poem which adds a force to the poem it would not otherwise have.

The potential discord between the Christian and the Germanic subsystems is avoided because each individual occurrence is fully supported by the presence of other elements in the subsystem of which it is a part, a phenomenon which helps a given occurrence seem appropriate. For example, in the case of Christ as Germanic warrior there is potential for discord, as just mentioned, between the Christian system in which Christ is literally not a warrior and leader of a war band but a wandering teacher who travelled about with a group of disciples teaching them about the kingdom of heaven. The reason that discord

does not occur in the poem at this point is that the war-lord presentation of Christ is supported by the rest of the fully-operating Germanic subsystem in the poem--the presence of retainers, the cross as retainer and practical treasure, etc. Sometimes these supporting elements are neither parallel nor opposite to elements in the other subsystem. But such elements help sustain the unity of the entire poem by serving as a kind of shock absorber for what might otherwise be discordant.

This tension without discord operates throughout the poem by means of three types of interrelationships between the Christian and the Germanic components. At specific points where elements of the Christian and the Germanic subsystems interrelate, one or more of three types of interrelation occur: (A) two elements closely parallel each other in significance; (B) two elements have at least partially opposite significance; and (C) there is no correspondence of a particular element in one subsystem to an element in the other. In this last circumstance the element in question operates as an extension of detail peculiar to the subsystem of which it is a part (see model below).

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to an examination of how specific points in the Christian and Germanic subsystems interrelate in The Dream and of the resulting tension which heightens the artistic achievement of the poem. It is significant to note that in the interrelationships between the major components in the Germanic subsystem and the corresponding components in the Christian subsystem all three types (A, B, and C) of interrelationships are functioning.



A= Elements in both subsystems and of essentially parallel significance

B= Elements in both subsystems but of essentially opposite significance

C= Elements operating in only one of the subsystems

Figure 1. Types of Interrelationships in The Dream of the Rood

Germanic and Christian Interrelationships Related to Christ

The nature and actions of Christ are an important element in the Germanic and Christian subsystems of The Dream. In the Germanic subsystem of the poem Christ is warrior, lord, king of a band of warriors for whom he battles in single combat with assistance only from the cross. He approaches the cross as a warrior would approach battle, stripped for action. He aggressively enters the contest. He suffers and dies and is treated as a fallen Germanic warrior laid out for viewing and lamented in a dirge. But in this poem this act has been the manifestation of victory rather than defeat, because like a victorious warrior he arises from the conflict to help his people. He rescues those who have been held captive by the enemy and returns to his native kingdom where he and his people celebrate in feasting and joy.

Christ in the Christian subsystem is God Almighty, beheld by angels. He suffered and died on the cross for man's sins, and for Adam's old deed (original sin). He was buried in a tomb but arose again. He was the Son of God, the deliverer of the saints from the burning to heaven. And he is to come again to earth at Doomsday to judge every man.

The interrelationship of the elements of the poem related to Christ involve all three types described above, A, B, and C. The Christs in the two subsystems are parallel in meaning and significance (type A) in that Christ was the leader of a group of followers in both systems, that the leader's action is a help to his people, that the leader is at the head of those who celebrate in his company and with each other.

The concept that the motivation for Christ's "battle" on the cross was the sin of men and Adam's old deed is an A-type interrelationship between Germanic and Christian subsystems. Just as many heroic battles took place because of the evil deed committed by an offender or because of a smoldering old wrong, Christ's suffering was because of man's sin and because of what Adam had done long ago. The Christian element is more far-reaching in its implications, but it is essentially parallel in significance to German battle fought to settle an old grievance.

The interrelationship regarding the Christian and Germanic Christ is of the B type with regard to the literal activity in relation to the cross. In the Germanic system, Christ is a warrior; in the Christian system, Christ is a wandering teacher of peace, not a warrior in the literal sense. The Germanic details of the pre-battle stripping and the rushing into combat intensifies the Germanic element of the poem. But the potential for discord is here doubly diminished. The death of Christ is often depicted in theological interpretation as a battle between God and the devil. In fact, John V. Fleming says that Christ as heroic figure is the least convincing of the so-called Germanic aspects of The Dream and states that "the geong haeleþ is no more 'Germanic' for the poet of The Dream of the Rood than he is for St. Ambrose."[1] Another factor which keeps the Germanic-warrior presentation of Christ from clashing with the Christian subsystem is the support which the heroic warrior image receives from other heroic aspects of the poem--specifically the frequent mention of the hosts who look to him, the Germanic funeral, and the comitatus quality of the joy in heaven.

Concerning this point of Christ as warrior, further comment is in order. Here allegorical relationships are in operation. At the physical or literal levels, the two subsystems involved are contradictory or at least very different from each other (B interrelationship). But the literal level of one (here the Germanic) is parallel to the abstract or philosophical level of the other (the Christian). From this perspective the interrelation would be type A. But even though an allegorical pattern is present at this point, allegory is still not fully operating because both subsystems remain in full view and neither remains even momentarily behind the metaphors of the other.

Germanic and Christian Interrelationships Related to the Cross

The cross too operates significantly in both Germanic and Christian subsystems of The Dream. In the Germanic subsystem it is faithful retainer and practical treasure. As such it is adorned with gold and jewels in recognition of its loyal service. It also takes on a very personal quality in that it suffers with Christ and addresses the dreamer. It also serves as scop recounting the heroism of Christ (and of itself). The cross's request of the dreamer to relate in words the glory of the cross is further indication that the scop tradition of accounts passed by word of mouth is operating.

In the Christian subsystem the cross functions as a symbol or sign for the significance of Christ's death to the extent that the cross and Christ merge almost into oneness; the joy and hope which the dreamer has because of Christ and because of the cross are the same, and the cross can operate as representative of Christ. The dreamer

prays to the cross as to Christ, etc. The cross has the power to heal those who pray to it. It will be the dreamer's security at Doomsday and will take him to heaven. The dreamer, in his present condition, "goes to the cross" in penance as part of his ascetic life according to the interpretation of Fleming (p. 65).

The interrelationships between the subsystems with regard to the cross are also of types A, B, and C. The type-A relationships include the significance of the cross as the instrument by which Christ's deed was performed. In the Germanic subsystem it is seen as a practical treasure--like a trusty sword. In the Christian system it is the instrument of Christ's suffering which redeemed mankind. There is also a type-A interrelationship in the cross's being made an honored object. The specific manifestations of that honor operate as A interrelationships. In the Germanic tradition, adorning an object with treasure is an indication of honor; and the Christian practice of decorating crosses with gold plate and gems indicates an attitude of veneration. Type-A interrelationship is seen also in the magical power of the cross. In the Germanic heroic tradition, old swords sometimes had magical qualities such as glowing. The cross had the power to heal. And finally, the significance of a practical treasure was enhanced by the famous heroes associated with it. The honor of the cross is due to the fact that it was on it that Christ suffered for a while to free man.

There is irony and ambiguity in the function of the cross as loyal retainer of Christ. Fleming believes that the cross was not loyal to Christ but participated in the worst of deeds in the Germanic system, the killing of his own lord (p. 45). Such appears to be the case, but the poem emphasizes that it was the lord's orders that the cross did not

dare go against (ll. 35, 42, 47). The cross as retainer in the Germanic subsystem has a type-C relationship to the Christian subsystem. It does not have a parallel or opposite significance in the Christian system of the poem but rather complements the Germanic system.

The fact that the cross functions as scop in the Germanic subsystem bears the same type of C relationship to the Christian subsystem.

Elements related to the cross in the Christian subsystem which have a type-C interrelationship with the Germanic subsystem are the dreamer's praying to the cross (ll. 123), and receiving protection from it at judgment (ll. 117-118). Even more significant as a C item in the Christian subsystem is the cross as the object of a vision--harkening back to Alexander's vision of the cross.

Germanic and Christian Interrelationships Related to the Dreamer

The dreamer's condition is that of an exile (or an ascetic). Exile is one of the elements of both the Germanic and Christian subsystems (asceticism in Christian terminology) which operates significantly in the two subsystems but which are essentially opposite in significance in relationship to each other, type-B interrelationships. Exile in the Germanic cultural system is a totally negative and painful experience, one which is to be avoided if at all possible and brought to an end as quickly as possible if such a fate does befall one. The exile is alone, cut off from lord, companions, protection and joy. The joy which is a part of the lamentation of the exile is the joy of remembered good times with lord and companions, the remembered generosity of his lord, the

remembered position of favor with friends and those of influence, as seen in Deor (ll. 35-42) and The Wanderer (ll. 37-44).[2]

The Christian exile of asceticism is opposite in many respects to Germanic exile. It is a positive experience chosen by rather than inflicted upon the one who experiences it. There is a desire for an end to the exiled condition, but that end should be put off as long as possible as the ascetic attempts to rid himself as completely as possible of the temptations and weaknesses of the flesh, and such a process demands much time and discipline. The ascetic is alone and cut off from the full fellowship of the Lord and the saints, but thoughts of these pleasures are hopes and expectations for the future rather than remembrances of conditions from the past. Whatever lamentation is present is for the weariness of the immediate circumstance and the accidia which is a hazard of the ascetic life. The friends of influence for the Christian exile are not in the past, but are the saints in heaven, and especially the Lord himself.

Thus the common ground in the Germanic and Christian concepts of exile is the solitary circumstance of a man in the present. To this degree the interrelationship at this point is an A type. But the differences beyond that simple condition of solitariness are great and involve the positive-negative, past-future aspects of that condition of Germanic and Christian exile (asceticism).

In The Dream of the Rood both types of exile are operating simultaneously. The dreamer is alone and he laments his present state both for the absence of what he once had (ll. 131-133) and because of the long-time suffering (ll. 125-126) he is undergoing. But he is also in exile from a future state of happiness for which he longs in the same

elegiac way that the Germanic longs for the return of past pleasures (ll. 126-131). The aloneness of the dreamer is distasteful, and he longs for the day when the cross will take him to heaven; but his exile is also positive in that the aloneness gives him the opportunity to go to the cross (ll. 122-124, 126-129), most likely in penitence which will make future joy possible for him.

It should be noted at this point that the interrelationship between the exile of the Germanic subsystem and the asceticism of the Christian subsystem is one in which the characteristics of each are present simultaneously--not a relationship in which one form of exile is a symbol or allegory of the other. And the operation of the two adds a dimension to the poem that a presentation of pure Germanic or pure ascetic exile would not have. The tension between the negative and positive attitudes toward exile emphasizes the suffering of the dreamer and his weariness. The positive aspect emphasizes his desire for penitence which will open the way to heaven. The dreamer's comment that he no longer has powerful friends is a lamentation for the past which heightens his longing for future joy in heaven. Thus, whereas the force of Germanic exile pulls in one direction and the force of asceticism pulls in another, the tension results in a dynamic representation of the dreamer's condition.

Other elements of interest include the comitatus and concepts of the cosmos. The comitatus structure in the Germanic subsystem is essentially in type-A relationship to the heavenly home concept in the Christian subsystem. The only real distinction between the two is that the Germanic comitatus is temporal and social whereas the Christian

heavenly home is cosmic in scope. The meanings are essentially the same in both subsystems--joy, security, company of lord and companions.

The implications of the Christian cosmos are essentially type C in relationship to the Germanic subsystem which reflects a society whose religion taught little about realities beyond this life.

Conclusion

The thesis of this study is that a systems study of The Dream of the Rood clearly reveals the nature of the interrelationship of the Christian and the Germanic subsystems as the source of the artistic tension in the unity of the poem. Perhaps it is necessary to stress the tension because of the high number of type-A interrelationships in the poem. Even in the type-A relationships there is tension rather than complete identity between the points under consideration in the two subsystems. Type-A relationships are equivalent in meaning, but the elements continue to operate fully in their own subsystems even when they are parallel in the other. They do not ever merge to the point that they are mere levels of meaning rather than functioning components.

The distribution of the A, B, and C types of interrelationships is significant in the operation of the tension in the poem. It should be noted that in each of the major components of the two subsystems--Christ, cross, dreamer and concepts related to them--all three types of relationships are functioning. This means that in all these major content components of the poem there is parallel significance (A) and opposing significance (B) between given elements in the two subsystems.

C relationships are also present in each case to fill out the subsystem and reduce or eliminate the possibility of discord.

If the reader can now approach The Dream of the Rood and perceive the components of the two subsystems in full operation throughout the poem, and can at least sense where the subsystems touch in parallel meanings, where they pull apart in opposite significance but are held together by the full operation of each subsystem, the reader will have grasped a conscious awareness of how the poem possesses the power and beauty which readers of The Dream of the Rood have long sensed.

NOTES

[1]John V. Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," Traditio, 22 (1966), 50.

[2]The Exeter Book, ed. George Philip Krapp and Eliot Van Kirk Dobbie, Vol. III, in The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1936), pp. 135, 179.

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